

# Vulnerabilities in social assistance

Coordonated by:

**Maria Alina Breaz**



# **VULNERABILITIES IN SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**Volume / 2022**

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**ALINA MARIA BREAZ**



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ALINA MARIA BREAZ**

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# Table of Contents

## **Remus Runcan**

Adoption in Romania: A legal perspective.....	7
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## **Dana Rad, Adela Redes, Evelina Balas, Alina Roman, Anca Egerau, Gavril Rad**

Pathways to sustainable digital literacy in early childhood education and care ECEC .....	23
--	----

## **Alina Maria Breaz, Mihail Breaz**

Old people – A group with increased vulnerability during the COVID-19 pandemic.....	45
--	----

## **Vasile Florin, Ovidiu Florin Toderici**

Vulnerabilități în sistemul educațional – Elevii cu situația neîncheiată la învățătură. Studiu privind elevii cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile, pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022, în județul Arad .....	61
---	----

## **Torkos Henrietta, Anca Manuela Egerău, Editha Margareta Coșarbă**

Readiness of future primary school teachers, regarding outdoor education teaching. A study case .....	75
--	----

## **Alexandrina-Mihaela Popescu, Gabriela Motoi**

Vulnerabilities of children whose parents are working abroad. Results of an empirical study on migrant parents.....	89
--	----

**Dana Rad, Gavril Rad**

Agile teams and well-being sustainability issue.....	105
--	-----

**Torkos Henrietta, Maria Alina Breaz**

Multimedia teaching learning strategies as a tool in training aptitude for schooling .....	123
---	-----

**Mihaela Gavrilă-Ardelean**

New legislation on the right to decide of people with mental health problems – Legislative proposal review .....	135
---	-----

**Mioara Lazăr, Gabriela Vancu**

Consequences of the mother's excessive emotional involvement in the recovery of the disabled child on marital satisfaction and on the relationship with the other children of the couple .....	145
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# Adoption in Romania: A legal perspective

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**Abstract.** This paper presents a legal perspective on both domestic and international adoption, both of which are defined. It also presents the main principles of adoption (common to both types of adoption), stresses the importance of family preservation, and presents, in detail, the main steps to go through in an adoption process no matter the type. The main issues of international adoption are also listed, together with a few conclusions on the two types of adoption.

**Keywords:** *adoption, domestic adoption, international adoption, adoption issues, Romania.*

## 1. Introduction

**Adoption** is defined, by *English language dictionaries*, as „the action or fact of legally taking another’s child and bringing it up as one’s own” (Lexico), by *dictionaries of sociology* as “the act by which someone becomes the legal parent of a child who is not his own natural descendant” (Zamfir & Vlăsceanu, 1998), and by *The Encyclopedia of Adoption*, as „the act of lawfully assuming the parental rights and responsibilities of another person, usually a child under the age of 18” (Adamec & Miller, 2007). There is no definition of **adoption** in “*Law no. 273 of 21 June 2004 on the adoption procedure republished*”.

According to *The Encyclopedia of Adoption* (Adamec & Miller, 2007), the linguistic sphere of **adoption** includes “*adopted-away, adopted-in, adoptee, adoption agency, adoption benefits, adoption circle, adoption medicine, adoption of adults, adoption studies, adoption subsidy, adoption triad, adoption triangle, adoptive parents, adult adopted person, adult adoptee, closed adoption, domestic adoption, failed adoption, foreign adoption, grandparent adoption, independent adoption, infant adoption, informal adoption, intercountry adoption, international adoption, open adoption, relative adoption, stepparent adoption, transnational adoption, transracial adoption, and wrongful adoption*”.

**Adoption** is the subject of “Law no. 273 of 21 June 2004 on the adoption procedure republished” (as a basic act), a law modified on the basis of the normative acts mentioned under **References**.

From a Romanian legal perspective, there are *two types of adoption* – *domestic adoption* and *foreign / intercountry / international / transnational adoption* – and both observe the following principles (“Law no. 273 of 21 June 2004 on the adoption procedure republished”):

- “The principle of the best interests of the child;
- The principle of increasing and educating the child in a family environment;
- The principle of continuity in educating the child, taking into account its ethnic, cultural and linguistic origin;
- The principle of informing the child and taking into account its opinion in relation to its age and degree of maturity;
- The principle of the celerity in fulfilling any acts relating to the adoption procedure;
- The principle of guaranteeing confidentiality as regards the identification data of the adoptive person or family, as well as of the identity of natural parents.”

However, **family preservation**, “efforts made by state and county social workers to enable children to stay with a family despite severe problems that prevented good parenting, such as drug abuse/addiction, alcoholism, mental illness, and/or criminal behavior” (Adamec & Miller,

2007, Costin, 2017, Costin & Roman, 2020), should come before **adoption** because “drug abuse/addiction, alcoholism, mental illness, and/or criminal behavior” is a (combination of) problems that usually leads to “child maltreatment in the form of abandonment, abuse, or neglect, and to *child removal from the home*, to *child placement in foster care* and, later, even to *child adoption*” (Gavrilă-Ardelean & Horvath, 2009, Bran, 2014).

## 2. Domestic Adoption

**Domestic Adoption** is defined as “adoption in which both the adoptive person or family and the adoptee have their habitual residence in Romania” (“*Law no. 273 of 21 June 2004 on the adoption procedure republished*”).

**Domestic adoption** implies five steps: *evaluating the adoptive person or family for licence, opening the adoption procedure, finding “the match between the child and the adoptive person or family”, entrusting for adoption and approving the adoption.*

### 2.1. Evaluating the adoptive person or family for licence

This process implies the following:

- Identifying parental skills, the fulfilment of moral guarantees and material conditions and their preparation for the assumption of parental role (Gavrila-Ardelean, in P. Runcan, 2021);
- Analysing the medical, psychological and social characteristics of other members “of the adoptive family or other people living with the applicant, as well as their opinion on adoption” (Gavrilă-Ardelean & Gavrilă-Ardelean, 2016, Mihaileanu & Sarbu, 2001);
- Evaluating: the economic situation of the adoptive person or family, analysed from the perspective of sources of income, their continuity, as well as expenditure; the impediments of any kind relevant to the ability to adopt;

- the personality and health of the adoptive person or family, “the family life, the living conditions, and the ability to grow and educate a child”; the reasons for which, if only one of the two spouses asks to adopt a child, the other husband does not support the request; the reasons why the adoptive person or family wishes to adopt;
- Concluding a collaboration protocol with the institution responsible for the child’s assistance and protection or with private bodies authorized to carry out activities in the procedure of domestic adoption in the area of the adoptive person or family;
- Issuing a licence of person or family apt to adopt by the institution responsible for the child’s assistance and protection;
- Extending “the validity of the licence at the request of the adoptive person or family” through the provision of the Directorate-General / Executive Director of the institution responsible for the child’s assistance and protection until the adoption, in the event that the matching procedure was finalized and the report on the matching was drawn up.

## ***2.2. Opening the adoption procedure***

This consists of:

- Establishing adoption as a finalization of the individualized protection plan, with the obligation to identify and contact the parents, to periodically inform on the place in which the child actually is, on the concrete ways in which they can maintain personal relationships with it and on the steps they have to achieve for the child’s reintegration;
- Controlling how the case manager and the subordinate personnel comply with the legal provisions;
- Adopting the child in placement where the case manager considers that this is in the interest of the child;

- Informing the persons with which the child has enjoyed family life for a minimum of 6 months regarding the establishment of adoption as the purpose of the individualized protection plan;
- Notifying the court for the opening of “the adoption procedure with the citation of the natural parents of the child or the guardian and the institution responsible for the child’s assistance and protection”;
- Approving the opening of the adoption procedure if: the individualized protection plan suggests domestic adoption; legal conditions are met; the child’s parents or guardians express their consent, according to the law;
- Applying for review by the natural parent(s) if, after “the final court decision, to open the adoption procedure in which the court has made the applicability of the provisions of the Civil Code”, the parent(s) may prove by any means of evidence the reason that caused the impossibility of manifesting their will;
- Suspending, after filing the application for review, the solution of the request for adoption or entrustment request for adoption if any of them are in session;
- Requesting the parent’s consent that has not previously been given by the court, if it approves the application for review, after the deposition by the institution responsible for the child’s assistance and protection of a counselling and information report “in accordance with the provisions of the law”;
- Resting and rejecting the entrustment request for adoption or approval of the adoption at the request of the institution responsible for the child’s assistance and protection where the parent who has been unable to express his consent opposes the adoption and there are no reasons for applying legal provisions.

### ***2.3. Finding the match between child and adoptive person or family***

This involves:

- Identifying and selecting the person or family licensed to adopt, responding to the identified needs of the child, and establishing “the compatibility between the child and the adoptive person or family”, giving priority to those who hold a licence valid for adoptive person or family: child relatives within the extended family; persons or families (professional nurse, person or family of placement, tutor) with which the child has enjoyed family life for a minimum of 6 months; the persons or families who have adopted the child’s brothers or who are in the procedure of adopting a brother or more;
- Observing two components – initial (when the adoption procedure has been opened, in the light of the National Adoption Register) and practical;
- Applying the initial and practical matching methodology “between the child and the person or family licensed to adopt” the criteria on the basis of which the match is made by the National Authority for the Rights of Disabled People, of the Children and of the Adoptees (Breaz & Goian, 2019, Breaz, 2019a, Breaz, 2019b);
- Drawing up the matching report at the end of the matching procedure, in which the conclusions regarding the compatibility “between the child and the adoptive person or family”, as well as the submission of the proposal (within 5 days) aimed at notifying the court for the child’s entrusting for adoption.

### ***2.4. Entrusting for adoption***

This is done:

- After the child has been entrusted for a period of 90 days to the adoptive person or family to analyse the child’s capacity of physical and mental adaptation “to the new family environment, capacity analysed in relation to socio-professional, economic,

cultural, linguistic, religious, etc. conditions characteristic of the place in which the child lives during the entrustment and which could be relevant in assessing its further evolution in the event of an approval of the adoption”;

- Exclusively on the basis of the documents submitted by the institution responsible for the child’s assistance and protection, without quoting the parties;
- By exercising “the right to represent the child in the legal acts”, to consent to the acts it ends, and administer the child’s goods;
- By monitoring the evolution of the child and the relations between him/her and the adoptive person or family during the child’s entrustment for adoption;
- By instituting the matter before the court with a view to revoking the custody measure if, during the period of custody for adoption, the institution responsible for the child’s assistance and protection finds that “there is no match between the child and the adoptive person or family or that there are any other reasons that prevent the completion of the adoption procedure”;
- By granting an accommodation leave of a maximum one year and a monthly allowance to the adoptive person or any of the spouses of the adoptive family;
- by ceasing the accommodation leave and the payment of the indemnity: at the age of 18 by the adoptee; upon definitive revocation of entrustment for adoption; upon expiration of accommodation leave; upon resuming the activity before the expiry of the accommodation leave granted to the adoptive person; upon the death of the child; upon the death of the person entitled to adopt as a person alone; “upon the request of the entitled person”;
- By not taxing the legal rights of the adoptive person;
- By granting the employee or, as the case may be, the spouse and wife who adopts, free time for the evaluations imposed by getting the licence and carrying out practical matching without diminishing wage rights, up to a maximum of 40 hours per year.

## **2.5. Approving the adoption**

This is for judicial courts to deal with and it implies:

- Applying for adoption approval, by the adoptive person or family, in the case of “the adoption of the person who has acquired full capacity in the exercise”, and, “in the case of the adoption of the child, by the husband of natural or adoptive parent”;
- Examining the application for the adoption by summing the institution responsible for the child’s assistance and protection, the institution which requested the opening of the adoption procedure and the adoptive person or family;
- Requesting again, by the court, the consent to the adoption of natural parents if, after the date when the consent has become irrevocable, they prove by any means of evidence that new elements have occurred that may cause the plan for individualized protection to be amended, in the sense of reintegration of the child in the family;
- Admitting, by the court, of the application for adoption only if, on the basis of the evidence administered, it has formed its conviction “that adoption is in the best interests of the child”, and the notification of natural parents in writing, as well as the competent Romanian authorities for the issuance of identity or travel documents for adoption.

## **3. Foreign / intercountry / international / transnational adoption**

Adamec & Miller (2007) define **international adoption** as „the adoption of a child who is a citizen of one country by adoptive parents who are citizens of a different country”.

**Foreign / intercountry / international / transnational adoption** is defined as “adoption in which the adoptive person or family and the child to be adopted have their habitual residence in different states, and,

following the consent of adoption, the child is to have the same habitual residence as that of the adoptive person or family” (*Law no. 273 of 21 June 2004 on the adoption procedure republished*”).

**International adoption** involves three steps: *compliance with general provisions, the administrative procedure prior to the referral of the court, and the approval of international adoption by the court.*

### ***3.1. Compliance with general provisions***

International adoption is possible only for children who are in the records of the National Authority for the Rights of Disabled People, of the Children and of the Adoptees, provided that:

- The adoptive person is “the husband of the parent of the child whose adoption is requested”;
- The adoptive person or “one of the adoptive family’s spouses is a relative of the fourth degree, including the child for whom the adoption procedure was opened”;
- The adoptive person or “one of the spouses of the adoptive family is also a Romanian citizen”: in this case, adoption is allowed for the child for which the application for the opening of the adoption procedure was admitted and it has not been possible to identify an adoptive person or family habitually resident in Romania, or the adoptive person or his/her spouse is a fourth degree relative of the child, “within one year from the date of the final assessment” by which the application for an opening of the adoption procedure was accepted.

The effects of international adoption or cancellation of international adoption on citizenship of adopted are provided by the Romanian Citizenship Law no. 21 of 1991, republished, with subsequent amendments and completions.

In the case of international adoptions “in which the adoptee is habitually resident abroad and the adoptive person or family is habitually resident in Romania, the applicants’ claims are transmitted to the competent foreign authorities only through the National Authority”.

### ***3.2. Administrative procedure for referral to court***

This includes:

- Applying for adoption to the National Authority: through the authority designated in the field of “international adoption or through organizations accredited in this respect in the receiving State in the case of persons or families which are habitually resident in the territory of a State which is not part of the Convention Hague”; “through the competent central authority of that State or its accredited organizations in the case of persons or families who are habitually resident in the territory of a State Party of the Hague Convention”;
- Certifying by “the competent central authority of the receiving State or its accredited and authorized organizations under the law that: post-adoption services for child and family are provided in the welcoming state”; the adoptive person will benefit from the same legal situation in the foreign country as the biological child of the adoptive person; “the adoptive person or family benefited from the necessary advice for adoption in the welcoming state; the adoptive person or family fulfils the eligibility conditions for adoption and is apt to adopt in accordance with the applicable law in the welcoming state”; the child’s evolution monitoring is ensured for at least 2 years post-adoption;
- Establishing, by the National Authority, “the initial and practical match of the child with the adoptive person or family with the ordinary residence abroad”;
- Notifying, by the National Authority, “the competent central authorities or accredited organizations in the welcoming State Selection of the adoptive person or family”;
- Requesting, by the National Authority, the transmission of the following documents: the act showing “that there are guarantees that the adoptee has the opportunity to enter and live permanently

in the welcoming State”; the agreement of the adoptive person or family regarding the selection of the adoptive person or family in the National Adoption Register, after the opening of the adoption procedure for the child at the request of the adoptive person or family; “the agreement on the continuation of the adoption procedure”;

- Issuing the agreement aimed at continuing the international adoption procedure and its transmission immediately to the central authority in the welcoming State.

### ***3.3. Approval of international adoption by the court***

This involves the following steps:

- Applying, by the National Authority, for adoption approval, accompanied by the documents provided by law;
- Assessing the applications for approval of international adoption with the summoning of the National Authority of the adoptive person or family;
- Issuing, by the National Authority, on the basis of the final assessment of the adoption, “upon the request of the adoptive person or family, a certificate attesting that the adoption is in accordance with the rules of the Hague Convention”;
- Moving the adoptee (only accompanied by the adoptive person or at least one of the spouses in the adoptive family, under safety conditions corresponding to the needs of the adoptee) from Romania “to the state in which the adoptive person or family is habitually resident only when the decision to approve the adoption is final”.

## **4. Adoption issues**

The main issues of **international adoption** – some of which are also common to **domestic adoption** – are (Adamec & Miller, 2007):

- The attitude towards adult adoptees;
- The attitude towards those who adopt children from other countries;
- The challenges of adaptation of the adoptee;
- The criteria set by the different countries for adoptive persons or families;
- The different cultural and legal perspectives on adoption;
- The different legal requirements for adoption;
- The factors influencing international adoption (abortion, avoidance of open adoption in which the adoptive parent(s) must meet the child's biological mother and the latter may continue to see her child, contraception, the conviction that a child came from a foreign orphanage is healthier than an abused and / or neglected child from an adoptive family in their own country, the difficulty / impossibility to adopt a child from their own country, the growing tendency of unique parents to keep their children, the risk that the biological parent(s) might want to regain their child, the shorter duration of the international adoption process);
- The international adoption process in the two countries;
- The origin of international adoptees;
- The reasons why children from other countries are preferred.

Apart from domestic/international child adoption issues, there may also be medical and short-, medium- or long-term development problems such as (Adamec & Miller, 2007):

- *Behavioural and psychiatric problems*: attachment disorders, food disorders, sleeping disorders, etc. (Gavrilă-Ardelean, 2008; 2020, Rad & Egerău, 2020);
- *Delays in development* caused by minimum exposure to communication in the pre-adoption environment or by prenatal exposure to alcohol, drugs, tobacco etc.;
- *Growth problems* such as early puberty;
- *Infectious diseases*: different forms of hepatitis, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) / acquired immunodeficiency

- syndrome (AIDS), intestinal parasitic infections, sexually transmitted diseases (gonorrhoea, syphilis), tuberculosis, etc.;
- *Nutrition deficiencies*: anaemia, malnutrition, rachitis.

## 5. Conclusions

The analysis of Romanian legal texts on adoption shows the following:

- Legal texts are too often subjected to changes and/or republishing (e.g., “*Law no. 273 of 21 June 2004 on the adoption procedure*”, last changes in 2020)
- Legal terms are not clearly defined and/or explained (e.g., adoption is not defined in “*Law no. 273 of 21 June 2004 on the adoption procedure*”);
- There are more steps to go through a domestic adoption than to go through an international adoption;
- There are fewer issues in domestic adoption (the attitude towards those who adopt children, the challenges of adaptation of the adoptee) than in international adoption, the health status of the adoptee, the origin of the adoptee).

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# Pathways to sustainable digital literacy in early childhood education and care ECEC

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**Abstract:** In early childhood education, educators are increasingly using structured techniques to teach literacy abilities. Digital technology is used to mediate family and community life for young children in affluent countries. Despite this, early childhood educators face a number of challenges and tensions when they integrate digital technology into their classroom practices. In many respects, the communication patterns of these young children mirror the digital behaviors they see in their environment. Importantly, not all children have equal access to digital technology, and different families have different attitudes on its use. The goal of this narrative review is to see how common concerns regarding the appropriateness of digital devices for young children are linked to safety concerns and the health consequences of screen time on eyesight, posture, sleep, and other factors. While the data is varied, a number of studies have shown that young children's digital activities are frequently intrinsically social. At a time when families are growing increasingly scattered,

applications can give vital chances for youngsters to engage with family members. Children regularly mix off-screen and on-screen play, and some young children may function not only as consumers but also as creators, innovators, and architects.

**Keywords:** *digital literacy, early childhood education and care, screen time.*

## **1. Interactive media in early childhood education and care**

Children nowadays are growing up in a fast changing digital environment that is vastly different from that of their elders. In our homes, businesses, and schools, we are surrounded by a variety of technology. Technology and media, when utilized correctly, may aid in learning and growth (Rad, Demeter, Ignat, Rad, 2020; Roman & Pinto, 2015; Schrande & Grassinger, 2021; Lackya et al, 2021; Sailer et al, 2021; Măță & Clipa, 2021; Egerau, et. al., 2021; Rad, Demeter, 2019; Rad, et. al., 2021; Rad, et. al., 2021; Maier, 2021; Maier et. al., 2021). Children's interactions with adults and peers may benefit from pleasurable and engaging shared experiences that maximize their potential for learning and growth. We know a lot about how young children grow, learn, play, and develop owing to a substantial number of studies. When contemplating the utilization of cutting-edge technology and new digital resources, there has never been a more critical time for the implementation of development and learning principles (Panisoara, Lazar, Panisoara, Chirca, Ursu, 2020; Adikari, et al, 2021, Kolhar, et al, 2021). Parents and educators can improve the program's effectiveness by deliberately guiding possibilities and media for the benefit of children when the integration of technology and interactive media into early childhood education training is based on stable developmental foundational principles and preschool practitioners are fully conscious of both the advantages and threats.

This narrative review recommends parents and care givers about using technology and interactive media to maximize cognitive, socio-

emotional, physically, and verbal development opportunities for young children. Computers, tablets, multitouch displays, interactive whiteboards, mobile devices, cameras, digital toys and games, and e-books are examples of technological instruments. The beneficial potential of employing technology and the media in ways that are based on child development principles has been proven by using them correctly and purposefully.

Children today are growing up in a world of digital multimedia (Couse & Chen 2010; Rideout, Lauricella, & Wartella 2011; Gweon, 2021, Chubb et al, 2021). Digital gadgets are rapidly becoming cultural instruments at home, schools, workplace, and in the communities (Kerawalla & Crook 2002; Buckleitner, 2009; Lisenbee, 2009; Berson & Berson 2010; Chiong & Shuler 2010). Communication, collaboration, social networks, and user-generated content have all been altered by technological advancements (Gutnick, et al. 2010; Jackson 2011; Jackson 2011; Wahi et al. 2011; Rahayu & Haningsih, 2021). These technologies, in particular, have changed how parents and families manage their daily lives and seek amusement, how instructors utilize teaching material with youngsters and connect with their parents and relatives, and how we educate and develop educators (Rideout, Vandewater, & Wartella 2003; Roberts & Foehr 2004; Rideout & Hamel 2006; Rideout, 2007).

Society is being tossed off equilibrium as a result of the fast transformation. The transition to new media literacy, as well as the requirement for digital literacy, which includes both technology and media literacy, will constantly change the environment in which young children grow and develop (Linebarger & Piotrowski 2009; Gold, 2016; Flewitt, 2011; Purnama, et al, 2021, Moreno-Morilla, et al, 2021). Because electronic media is so prevalent in young children's life, they spend a growing number of hours each week in front of a screen, engaging with a variety of devices such as televisions, computers, smartphones, tablets, consoles and other gadgets. The boundary between device, content, and user experience has blurred thanks to multitouch displays and motion-enabled technologies that recognize and respond to a child's movements.

These numerous technical instruments can be utilized for learning and development with supervision; but, without supervision, their usage may be inappropriate and negatively impact learning and development. Several public and professional health advocacy groups, as well as nongovernmental organizations for children concerned with child management and health issues such as obesity, have advised against using passive, non-interactive technology and screen media in early childhood care and education in response to these concerns.

Non-interactive content, such as TV episodes, movies, and other digital resources, is now available on a wide range of displays. Non-interactive technologies and technical techniques are excluded from the definition and description of effective and acceptable use unless they are utilized in ways that encourage active participation and engagement. In young children, non-interactive environments may encourage passive observation and excessive screen time, but they are no alternative for interactive and engaging digital media use, as well as relationships with adults and peers.

## **2. “Screen time” – particularities at preschool age**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (2010, 2011) opposes all types of screen help and screen time for children under the age of two, and recommends that children over the age of two have no more than one-two hours of daily total screen time (Funk, et al., 2009). Early childhood obesity policies (Birch, Parker, Burns 2011) recommend that parents and educators limit screen usage for preschoolers (ages 2 to 5 years) to no more than 30 minutes per day. Furthermore, the research advises experts to collaborate with parents to reduce children aged two to four to no more than two hours of screen use each day.

All of these issues must be addressed by early childhood educators, who must acknowledge the crucial position educators are playing in mediating technological consumption, media consumption, and screen-time. As a consequence of the introduction of digital devices

with screens, defining “screen time” has become more complicated, and it is no longer merely a discussion of time spent watching digital materials. The amount of time spent in front of a television screen is only one factor to consider when assessing screen-time. Computers, tablets, smartphones, and other gadgets provide an expanding number of displays to today’s youngsters. The total amount of time spent in front of all of these displays is referred to as screen time (Guernsey, 2010). Along with the advancements of digital technologies that has progressed exponentially, static settings to incorporate interactive alternatives, it is obvious that each screen has different sets of successful usage requirements (Kleeman, 2010). The challenge for early educators is to make informed decisions that maximize children’s learning opportunities while regulating screen-time and mitigating the risk of screen abuse and overuse, particularly when these devices provide novel interfaces that increase their appeal and become addictive. There is contradictory information about the influence of technologies in the area of children development.

Irregular circadian rhythm, behavior disorders, difficulty concentrating and listening attentively, academic success, a detrimental influence on socializing and language development, and increased time spent in front of screens by young children are all potential negative consequences (Hofmann & Müller, 2021; Anderson & Pempek 2005; Christakis et al. 2004; Tomopoulos et al. 2010; Appel & O’Gara 2001; Lee, Bartolic, & Vandewater 2009; Rogow 2007; Vandewater et al. 2007; Brooks-Gunn & Donahue 2008; DeLoache et al. 2010). The study’s conclusions, however, are still divided, which may be puzzling for educators and parents. Some media researchers argue that there is little evidence that screen media is inherently harmful. According to the study’s findings, when television broadcasts and electronic resources are skillfully designed to include what is understood regarding effective reading education and act as positive and powerful education - learning aids (Pasnik et al. 2007; Neuman, Newman, & Dwyer 2010; Macovei, et al., 2011; Bran, 2018; Roman, Ban, 2015). Correspondingly, while critics

have issued multiple warnings about the adverse effects of computers and other digital devices on youngsters' development, Wainwright and Linebarger (2006) determined that the most rationale conclusions driven from the current published research is that what counts is the instructive content, not just the display layout (Wainwright & Linebarger 2006). In conclusion, certain television episodes, websites, and other forms of digital media are educationally useful, while others are of lesser value, if not completely useless. Children spend a lot of time with digital devices (Vandewater & Lee 2009; Christakis & Garrison 2009; Tandon et al. 2011; Rad, et. al., 2019), but how they utilize that time is as crucial (Hammer et al 2021, Mahmoud et al, 2021).

The influence of technology is reduced when parents and educators are using the same rules and educational conducts that govern the use of printouts and other such learning tools and content for toddlers (Sun et al, 2021; Clements & Sarama 2003; Van Scoter, Ellis, & Railsback 2001; Plowman & Stephen 2005, 2007). Technology and the media are only useful if they are used appropriately. The allure of technology, as well as the constant flood of innovative gadgets, might lead some parents and teachers to utilize multimedia materials for the purpose of just using them and not mainly for enhancing the learning process. Technology should not be used for activities that are not beneficial to education, development, or the economy. Non-interactive multimedia tools utilization and in general any screen support is insufficient to replace active play, interaction with peers, and adult contact.

Parents and educators who are digitally literate and well-versed in child development practices own the expertize and abilities to choose and use technological devices and multimedia environments that are appropriate for the ages and stages of development of their children, as well as the time and resources available (Gavrila-Ardelean, 2016; Gavrila-Ardelean, et al., 2017; Gavrila-Ardelean, et al., 2020; Costin, Roman, 2020, Breaz, 2020; Breaz, 2020; Breaz, 2020). Unskilled educators with less technological abilities are risking making poor judgments and utilizing technology inappropriately with toddlers. Concerns about equity and

access, on the other hand, remain unanswered. Early educators must vigilantly take into consideration access and equity concerns when selecting, employing, integrating, and analyzing technology and interactive media since they have the ability to positively influence healthy growth and development. Educators have the opportunity to lead in ensuring that every child, parent, and family in their care have equitable access to technology and new multimedia encounters.

Young children require early technological skills related to early digital literacy, which are analogous to book page handling abilities related to early literacy development. According to the International Society for Technology in Education, children as young as five years old should grasp basic abilities in technology processes and concepts (2007). Children who otherwise would not possess access to digital camera systems, computers, and other technological equipment can benefit from early childhood education. Educators must also consider the learning opportunity and creativeness that high-quality interactive settings may provide for children, particularly when paired with appropriate learning resources and complementing activities that operate in tandem to speed learning, to reduce the economic disparity between children from low-income homes and those from higher-income households. E quality and access are tackled when instructors incorporate suitable technology and interactive media into lessons, permitting all learners to participate and engage (Cross, Woods & Schweingruber 2009; Judge, Puckett, & Cabuk 2004). Concerns regarding fairness and access have ramifications for early childhood educators and policymakers. Some early childhood educators, like the families of the children, have comparable difficulties with technical equipment and Internet access at home and at work. Policymakers who are committed about children's access and equity, parents, families, and teachers, should always be enlightened about findings and the importance of technology tools and interactive media in early education.

When utilized purposefully by early childhood educators as part of excellent developmental practice to support explicitly established

learning goals for children, technology and interactive media can promote successful academic success. Understanding the developmental phases of children is the very first step in creating a structure of appropriate developmental activities for them. This information offers a high-level overview of activities, routines, relationships, and courses that might be beneficial. After that, each child in the special group is evaluated individually as well as in the context of their family, community, culture, linguistic norms, social group, past experience, including learning and behavior. Interactions between children and technology and interactive media are becoming increasingly embedded in their everyday lives, and they must be managed as part of a healthy development framework. In order to make educated judgments about how to employ technology to enhance literacy development, educators need knowledge and resources regarding the nature of these tools and the consequences of their usage.

### **3. Guiding principles to use interactive media in early education**

We will further describe the principles that should govern the use of advanced technologies and interactive digital resources in early childhood settings, as well as the principles that must govern the effective use of technology for toddlers. The usage of electronic instruments and interactive methods is not supposed to endanger youngsters. A child's cognitive, socio-emotional, physical, and linguistic development is just as important now as it has always been.

Technology and interactive techniques should not be used to exclude, limit, or obstruct good communication, social connections, playtime, and other developmentally appropriate relationships with coworkers, family, and educators. Children must never be exposed to the internet or media in ways that are damaging to their emotional or physical well-being, disrespectful, humiliating, hazardous, exploitative, or threatening. One example is unwarranted exposure to violence or too sexualized images. Early childhood educators should monitor and evaluate the findings of research on themes in the same way that in areas

like as child health and development, they have traditionally been encouraged and pushed to monitor and use the most recent research results. Pollutants from lead paint or battery packs, tiny component choking hazards, childhood obesity, screen time, or any other potentially dangerous, physiological or developmental repercussions or side effects associated with technology usage. When it comes to incorporating technology and interactive media into children's curricula, good development practices must be used as a guide.

Incorporating essential materials, activities, and relationships into regular routine, appropriate technology and techniques of usage balanced and improve the use of essential components, activities, and relationships in early childhood (Van Scoter, Ellis, & Railsback 2001; Copple & Bredekamp 2009). Digital devices and multimedia should never be used to replace key developmental activities for children, such as creative play, real-life discovery, physical exercise, outdoor experiences, discussion, and social interactions. Technology and media should be utilized to supplement, not replace, learning, especially for young children's access to new information (Anderson 2000; Guernsey 2010, 2011). In infants and young children, responsive exchanges between people of all ages are critical for neurodevelopment, as well as cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and linguistic development.

Recognizing that there may be appropriate uses of technology for infants and toddlers in certain environments, educators and parents should limit screen-time and ensure that the use of technology and multimedia, like all other activities and experiences with infants and young children, supports as a teaching opportunity. Early childhood educators should continually draw on their knowledge of child development and successful practices to pick technology and media that promotes healthy development, learning, creativity, social interactions, and relationships. This is especially true for people who work with children under the age of five. The educational applications aren't created equal. To promote learning, the finest applications incorporate multimedia components in a way that is consistent with the story or

learning aim. An app with too many bells and whistles might be distracting and hinder learning. A high-quality app will offer material in a way that actively engages the kid and encourages creative exploration rather than rote learning. Because their fine motor abilities are still developing, preschoolers find it simplest to use touchscreen gadgets. When used correctly, touchscreen devices may actually inspire youngsters to work together and develop their social skills by allowing them to take turns and share ideas while doing online tasks and viewing educational content.

To decide if and when a certain use of technology or the environment is age adapted, personally acceptable, culturally and linguistically suitable, professional assessment is required. Based on their experience and comprehension of children 's learning and development, children's preferences and capabilities, and the social and cultural contexts in which children inhabit, early childhood educators make decisions about *if, how, what, when, and why* technology and media are utilized. The adult's involvement is critical in ensuring that careful planning, execution, reflection, and evaluation all drive judgment regarding how to incorporate and merge any form of technology or multimedia into initial experience. Selecting the appropriate technology and digital material is similar to selecting any other educational resource. To ensure that every kid has a favorable result, early childhood experts must make deliberate, sensitive, and intentional judgments on a regular basis. The choosing of resources, including technology and interactive multimedia, must always be influenced by appropriate developmental teaching approaches.

Early childhood education experts must devote time to evaluating and selecting technology and media, as well as closely monitoring children's usage of materials to discover possibilities and issues, and making necessary modifications. When new technology is presented, kids must be eager to study and get comfortable with it, ensuring that the information is developmentally appropriate and does not communicate biased views.

During the decision-making process, administrator, parents, and instructors should consider cost-effectiveness and the spending of educational resources, such as starting costs, continuous costs of renewing and modernizing software, and other expenditures. Other variables to consider are the device's lifespan in active use by young children, as well as the cost of replacement if it is abandoned or destroyed. Children's motivations for using the product or purchasing more from the supplier should be thoroughly explored and analyzed. Teachers and parents will have a better understanding of technical and interactive multimedia resources if technology and media owners and developers agree to use research-based data in product development, marketing, and promotion (Buckleitner 2011; Ferrara et al, 2021).

How a kid uses technology and media is influenced by their age, developmental stage, needs, interests, linguistic background, and abilities. Children's tool and material usage progresses along a developmental path, from curiosity to competence, and finally to functional subordination (using the tools to perform other tasks). Before they are expected to utilize these techniques to communicate, children require time to learn about using them. Before teaching children to write their names, we teach them how to use paper and pencils, so it seems appropriate to provide them access to technical instruments for inquiry and exploration. The bulk of technology and media are inappropriate for children under the age of two, and there is no indication that passive screen watching in babies and toddlers leads to particular learning outcomes (Schmidt et al. 2009). Parents must be sensitive while interacting with infants and toddlers. Mobile displays, multitouch, and other modern technology, on the other hand, have altered how our younger children engage with pictures, sounds, and concepts (Buckleitner 2011).

Caretakers must ensure that the child's access to technology or multimedia is limited, that it is used for exploration and incorporates common attention and linguistic interactions, and that it does not limit the child's opportunities for caring and sensitive relationship with the

caregiver. Preschoolers have varying amounts of control over technology and media, although they may exhibit mastery of simple electronic media under adult supervision and are frequently seen utilizing them in role play. School-aged children, who are more comfortable with technology, may utilize it to express themselves, study, and examine the world. Younger children are becoming increasingly adept at utilizing electronic tools to complete a task - snapping a photo, playing a game, recording a narrative, or other suitable learning activities - as gadgets and programs become easier to use. Exploration and mastery are still possible with today's technological tools and interactive media. Technology and multimedia should be used in a way that is active, engaging, and offers the kid control. Toddlers require tools that allow them explore, create, solve problems, analyze, think, listen, and look critically, make decisions, observe, document, investigate, and show technology and media with other key experiences and possibilities. Effective technology solutions link on-screen activities, focusing on co-visualization and co-participation between parents, children, and peers (Takeuchi 2011). Instead of dividing adults and children, these technologies have the potential to bring them together for a shared experience. For example, a caregiver may read a narrative in print or as an interactive e-book. These various forms of media interaction appear to be quite comparable when seen in the perspective of human contact. Co-viewing and co-media interaction are examples of early book reading and other collaborative activities between adults and children.

Technology and interactive techniques that stimulate outside exploration and nature documentation, or that include physical exercise and encourage children to play, can address the rising worry that screen-time and gaming are depleting children of physical exercise and outdoor recreation. Instead than sitting idly next to a screen, stand up and move about. Technology and the media are just two instances of the many instruments that may be used effectively. Technology and media, likewise many other topics, should be utilized judiciously in the

education, and should be used to enhance rather than substitute important activities, experiences, and assets.

Correctly harnessed, digital technology may help children increase their intellectual and socio-emotional skills. Other objects such as bricks, manipulators, art supplies, play materials, books, and writing materials, as well as technology and media, can be utilized to increase learning in early childhood settings. Animals, things, people, landscapes, activities, and places that children would not normally experience can be introduced to them. Digital devices are also able to aid children record, identify, analyze, and express their inner world through photographs, storytelling, and music. Traditional materials may be able to survive and expand in helpful ways if they are used properly and actively. Technology has a positive influence on toddlers' developmental stages, at cognitive and social level, according to studies (Kirkorian, Wartella & Anderson 2008; Freeman & Somerindyke 2001; Clements & Sarama 2003, 2003; Fischer and Gillespie 2003; Rideout, Vandewater, & Wartella 2003; Greenfield 2004; Linebarger, Piotrowski and Lapierre 2009; McNamee et al, 2021; Heft & Swaminathan 2002; Haugland 1999, 2000;).

Overall, evidence shows that integrating a narrative approach with Gagné's nine events of instruction (Smith, Ragan, 2005) is a feasible technique for promoting early childhood reading and digital literacy development. In order to get beyond the entertainment or novelty impact that digital storytelling may provide, future research may explore developing a more extended sequence of activities to minimize the novelty effect and maximize all the advantages that may emerge from digital storytelling activities (Campbell, 2012; Maureen, et al., 2018).

More study is needed to confirm the positive effects of technology tools on children's language and vocabulary development, logical-mathematical comprehension, problem-solving capacity, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills enhancement. Technology and multimedia spent time has to be pleasurable and foster imagination, curiosity, active play, and participation in outdoor activities.

#### 4. Discussion and conclusions

Screen media is becoming more prevalent in the lives of young children. Understanding the influence of specific technologies such as tablets or e-books on literacy, as well as the best strategies to incorporate these devices into children's daily routines at home, in daycare, or in the classroom, is critical. This article examined emerging practices and their consequences for parents, teachers, and policymakers.

The findings of this narrative review are based on research that looked at the many and frequently contradictory discourses that emerge when early educators discuss the utilization of digital multimedia resources in early education. Many instructors find it difficult to offer an open-ended logic for using of digitally enhanced devices in the formative years because of restricted ideas of literacy, which depict literacy as static, printed, and as a competency to be taught. As a result, there are three types of digital technology: those that support pre-existing literacy objectives, those that work against pre-existing literacy goals, and those that play an educational role in harmonizing the printed and digital interactions of children. In this age of rapid communication change, societal precepts such as increasing perceived low literacy levels and print-based notions of literacy are at odds with the rise of new conceptions of the possibilities of early literacy acquisition mediated by digital technology.

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# Old people – A group with increased vulnerability during the COVID-19 pandemic

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**Abstract:** The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the world from several perspectives: economic, social, health and psychological. The restrictive measures imposed by all countries and governments have had important psychological consequences on people's lives. One of the most vulnerable groups during this period is the elderly, whether they live alone or in care centers. Studies from researchers around the world point to an increased risk of mortality and morbidity in this age group. Comorbidities (chronic diseases inherent in old age) center this risk. In addition, care centers for the elderly have become foci of infection, not only in our country but also in other countries. All studies conclude that governments must take into account the negative effects of restrictive measures and provide the social and psychological services needed to help all sections of the population, especially the elderly and children.

**Keywords:** *old age, vulnerability, pandemic, high risk, COVID-19.*

The social integration of older adults is crucial for understanding their risk of infection and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the social lives of older adults differ, which means they are not

all vulnerable to COVID-19 in the same way as the other people. Chen (2021) analyzes in his article their vulnerabilities during the pandemic. He concludes that the patterns of time use and social contacts of the elderly have changed and persisted during COVID-19; then, such variations in the organization of social life may create different exposure contexts and vulnerabilities to social distancing measures among older adults; such information could help inform interventions to better protect this population. Older age, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, hypertension, and cancer were all associated with an increased risk of death. A meta-analysis of eight studies including patients with laboratory confirmed covid-19 indicated that those with the most severe disease were more likely to have hypertension (odds ratio 2.36 (95%), respiratory disease (2.46), and cardiovascular disease (3.42).

Jordan, Adab and Cheng (2020) examine the factors that increase the risk of a pandemic in the UK. Up to 25% of people in the United Kingdom are designated high risk — including all adults aged over 70 and those with underlying health conditions such as respiratory and cardiovascular disease, and cancer. Strict restrictions are in place for everyone, reducing movement outside the home to an absolute minimum, except for essential workers. These measures will be in place for weeks, possibly months. Among vulnerable groups including older adults, such severe restrictions are likely to lead to further loneliness, isolation, and loss of mental and physical function.

The case-fatality rate for COVID-19 increases dramatically with age from 3% to 5% between 65 and 74 years, 4% to 11% between 75 and 84 years, and 10% to 27% above 85 years and people aged 65 years and older account for 45% of hospitalizations, 53% of intensive care unit admissions, and 80% of deaths (Le Couteur et al, 2020).

COVID-19, the disease caused by the highly contagious virus SARS-CoV-2, can have serious health consequences, although risks of complications are highly age-dependent. Rates of hospitalization and death are less than 0.1% in children, but increase to 10% or more in older people. Moreover, at all ages, men are more likely than women to suffer

serious consequences from COVID-19. These patterns are familiar to the geroscience community. The effects of age and sex on mortality rates from COVID-19 mirror the effects of aging on almost all major causes of mortality. These similarities are explored here, and underscore the need to consider the role of basic biological mechanisms of aging on potential treatment and outcomes of COVID-19 (Promislow, 2020). He states that there can be no doubt as to the interaction of aging biology and COVID-19 mortality, and it seems likely that a better understanding of this relationship would inform not only the biology of viral susceptibility and progression to life-threatening outcomes, but also how aging creates a pernicious environment that increases the negative consequence of viral load.

Fingerman et al (2021) examined how living alone was associated with daily social contact and emotional well-being among older adults during the pandemic. Older adults who live alone were less likely to see others in person or to receive or provide help. Living alone was associated with more positive emotions concurrent with in-person contact. In contrast, phone contact was associated with higher levels of negative affect among those living alone, but not among those who live with others. Older adults who live alone were more likely to have contact with friends (rather than family) .In-person contact may confer distinct benefits not available via telephone contact, suggesting that possible interventions during the pandemic may work best with safe forms of in-person contact, possibly with nonfamily members.

Social distancing and “stay-at-home” orders are essential to contain the coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19), but there is concern that these measures will increase feelings of loneliness, particularly in vulnerable groups. Luchetti et al (2020) examined change in loneliness in response to the social restriction measures taken to control the coronavirus spread, on a nationwide sample of American adults. The loneliness, however, leveled off after the issuance of stay-at-home orders. Individuals living alone and those with at least one chronic condition reported feeling lonelier at baseline but did not increase in loneliness

during the implementation of social distancing measures. Despite some detrimental impact on vulnerable individuals, in the present sample, there was no large increase in loneliness but a remarkable resilience in response to COVID-19.

Also about loneliness is von Tilburg et al (2021) in the Netherlands analyzing that consequent reduction in the frequency of social contacts, personal losses, and the experience of general threats in society reduced well-being. He states that in this pandemic, the loneliness of older people increased, but mental health remained roughly stable. The policy measures for physical distancing did not cause much social isolation but personal losses, worries about the pandemic, and a decline in trust in societal institutions were associated with increased mental health problems and especially emotional loneliness. The consequences of long-term social isolation and well-being must be closely monitored.

Litwin and Levinski (2021) examine the influence of social networks on selected aspects of mental health following the outbreak of coronavirus. Their results show that face-to-face network contact significantly reduced negative mental health changes while electronic contact significantly increased them. The age interactions were insignificant. Country differences were observed. Their findings suggest that face-to-face social networks can moderate the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on important aspects of mental health.

Ayalon et al (2020b) present the problem of aging in time of COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed many aspects of the world, including how older persons are treated. We believe that research evidence from the behavioral sciences of aging can help address the pandemic in ways that can benefit the health and well-being of individuals across the life span. They think that there are three primary ways that evidence from behavioral sciences can make a difference. First, with the pandemic there has been a parallel outbreak of ageism. What they were seeing in public discourse is an increasing portrayal of those over the age of 70 as being all alike with regard to being helpless, frail, and unable to contribute to society. They offer a few recommendations that may be helpful in navigating the current pandemic.

Some research suggests that compared to younger adults, older adults have more homogeneous, less diverse daily life experiences because everyday situations and activities become increasingly stable and routine. However, strong empirical tests of this assumption are scarce. In two complementary studies, Weber et al (2020) examined whether older age is associated with less diversity in daily life experiences (e.g., regarding social interaction partners, activities, and places across and within days) and, if so, to what extent health limitations account for these age differences. Results showed that across and within days, the daily lives of older adults were less diverse regarding their social interaction partners. Yet, older adults reported more diversity in activities within days and across days in the afternoons, whereas younger adults reported less diverse activities partly due to working or studying more often. Age differences remained statistically significant when controlling for health limitations. They conclude that age differences in the diversity of daily life are nuanced, depending on the domain and the level of analysis.

Chai and Margolis (2020) analyze time use and living arrangements among older Canadians. Living alone is very common among older Canadians, where 25.8% of adults 65 and above lived alone in 2016. The rise of living alone around the world has prompted debate about whether living alone has negative implications for older adults' well-being, health, and social integration. Those living alone spend more time communicating with others than older adults in other living arrangements and spend comparable amounts of time eating / drinking to most other groups. Older adults living alone had similar time on self-care to most other groups, and much less time on caregiving for others than those in all other living arrangements, and significantly less time on housework than those living with just a spouse. They find few differences in time spent on leisure by living arrangements. In terms of subjective time use, older adults living alone are no more likely than those living with others to feel like they don't spend enough time with family or friends. In addition, older adults living alone were much less likely than

other groups to feel pressed for time, feel rushed, or feel stressed out about not having enough time.

Aging in the public eye can be distilled to a limited number of adverse events, such as loss of health, partnership and wealth. While these events are a constitutive part of “normal aging,” they do not occur uniformly at the same time point in the life course. The study of Vanhoutte (2021) investigates to what extent bereavement, functional health loss, and onset of poverty are adequate markers of aging, and illustrates inequalities in their timing according to cohort, gender, class, education, and ethnicity. Persistent associations of lower occupational class, lower education, and having a black or minority ethnic background are found with increased hazards of functional health loss and wealth loss. Earlier born cohorts have lower hazards for functional health loss, wealth loss, and bereavement. Women have higher hazards for bereavement, and lower hazards for wealth loss. The timing of adverse events is a crucial gateway through which existing social inequalities are transferred into unequal aging pathways.

Giuntella et al (2021) document dramatic changes in physical activity, sleep, time use, and mental health. They show that biometric and time-use data are critical for understanding the mental health impacts of COVID-19, as the pandemic has tightened the link between lifestyle behaviors and depression. Their findings also suggest a puzzle: Disruptions to physical activity and mental health are strongly associated, but restoration of physical activity through a short-term intervention does not help improve mental health. The results highlight the large impact of COVID-19 on both lifestyle and well-being and offer directions for interventions aimed at restoring mental health.

A significant proportion of the worldwide population is at risk of social isolation and loneliness as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Williams et al (2021) aimed to identify effective interventions to reduce social isolation and loneliness that are compatible with COVID-19 shielding and social distancing measures. Many effective interventions involved cognitive or educational components, or facilitated

communication between peers. These interventions may require minor modifications to align with COVID-19 shielding / social distancing measures. Future high-quality randomized controlled trials conducted under shielding / social distancing constraints are urgently needed.

With 1,582 respondents from the Health and Retirement Survey, the study by Fu et al (2022) investigates heterogeneity in older adults 'vulnerability and examines the relationship between vulnerability types, aging attitudes, and emotional responses. Their results showed that the proportion for individuals with mild vulnerability, healthcare use vulnerability, and dual vulnerability in healthcare use and financial sustainment was 11%, respectively. The relationship between vulnerability and positive emotions was non-significant.

Public health emergencies may affect the health, safety, and well-being of both individuals (causing, for example, insecurity, confusion, emotional isolation, and stigma) and communities (owing to economic loss, work and school closures, inadequate resources for medical response, and deficient distribution of necessities). These effects may translate into a range of emotional reactions (such as distress or psychiatric conditions), unhealthy behaviors (such as excessive substance use), and noncompliance with public health directives (such as home confinement and vaccination) in people who contract the disease and in the general population. Extensive research in mental health disaster has established that emotional distress is ubiquitous in affected populations - a finding certain to be echoed in populations affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic has alarming implications for individual and collective health and emotional and social functioning. In addition to providing medical care, already stretched health care providers have an important role in monitoring psychosocial needs and delivering psychosocial support to their patients, health care providers, and the public - activities that should be integrated into general pandemic health care (Pfefferbaum and North, 2020).

Garrett (2020) argues that in a world of polarizing distrust and trade tensions, the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), both

within nations and internationally, is aided and abetted by misinformation that circumnavigates the planet in microseconds. Such misinformation is not all malevolent, although its impact can be devastating. The only bastion of defense against rising public panic, financial market hysteria, and unintended misunderstandings of the science and epidemiology of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is agile, accurate, worldwide-available counter-information that takes the high moral ground and conveys a consistently science-driven narrative. Some have sought to limit misinformation about COVID-19 on social media by pressuring corporations, such as Facebook, Weibo, and Twitter, to censor bad actors — an approach that has not stopped conspiracy theorists, trolls, and liars.

The COVID-19 pandemic is creating unprecedented, sustained, and unavoidable stress for the entire population, and older people are facing particularly heightened risk of contracting the virus and suffering severe complications, including death. The study by Carstensen et al (2020) was conducted when the pandemic was spreading exponentially in the United States. They assessed the frequency and intensity of a range of positive and negative emotions; perceived risk of contagion and complications from the virus, as well as personality, health, and demographic characteristics. Age was associated with relatively greater emotional well-being both when analyzes did and did not control for perceived risk and other covariates. Their findings extend previous research on age and emotion by demonstrating that older adults ‘relatively better emotional well-being persists even in the face of prolonged stress.

The study of Bui et al (2021) addressed race – ethnic differences in the relationships between emotional distress and current and expected coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic stressors. Older persons of color reported higher rates of stressors and emotional distress than their White counterparts. In relation to current stressors, older Black persons responded with less emotional distress and older Latino persons responded with more emotional distress than older White persons. In

Old people – A group with increased vulnerability during the COVID-19 pandemic

addition, older persons of color were more likely to expect future resource losses related to COVID-19, and the association between these expectations and emotional distress varied by race – ethnic group. The findings reflected the disproportionate negative impact of COVID-19 stressors on emotional distress among older persons of color, providing a baseline for future studies to further examine the impacts of the pandemic among diverse older adult populations.

The data shows differences in COVID-19 cases by age. In May 2020, the cumulative COVID-19 incidence rate per 100,000 of the population aged 65+ was 214.4 in the United States. In contrast, people in other age groups had lower incidence rates per 100,000 of their respective populations compared to the older adult population. It is possible that these numbers are underestimated due to factors such as lack of test availability, varying testing practices, and delays in reporting. In addition to older age, there are other socioeconomic factors that amplify the vulnerability of older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic era. Gerontological social workers should pay extra attention to disadvantaged older adults, guided by the social determinants of health (SDH) conceptual framework. Vulnerable older adults include those who live in poverty, with a disability, and in social isolation (Lee, 2020).

The detailed facts surrounding the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic are still evolving; however, one of the most shocking aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic is how lethal this condition is for the older population. The risk of death and severe illness with COVID-19 is best predicted by age. The likelihood of death increases exponentially with age among those who contract the virus in all countries where this has been examined shows the percentage of confirmed cases ending in mortality, by age, for five countries near the beginning of June. In every country, the percentage dying increases sharply after age 50, and the highest rates occur among the oldest persons. The age pattern is clear across the countries even though mortality levels are quite different; the United States has had a much greater number of cases and deaths than the other countries in this figure,

but the mortality level was higher in Italy. This difference in levels could be influenced by the proportion of diagnosed cases, which depends on testing, treatment of cases, and whether COVID-19 deaths include only those confirmed with a diagnostic test or include both confirmed and probable deaths. Even with these differences, the pattern of an exponential increase in death with age is clear (Crimmins, 2020).

Choi, Carr and Namkung (2020) examined whether older adults with physical disabilities were vulnerable to three types of perceived economic insecurity (difficulty paying regular bills, difficulty paying medical bills, and income loss) and two types of perceived food insecurity (economic obstacles and logistical obstacles) during the early months of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. They evaluated the extent to which associations are moderated by three personal characteristics (age, sex, and race / ethnicity) and two pandemic-specific risk factors (job loss and COVID-19 diagnosis). Older adults with more functional limitations were vulnerable to economic and food insecurity during the pandemic, potentially exacerbating the physical and emotional health threats imposed by COVID-19. Supports for older adults with disabilities should focus on logistical as well as financial support for ensuring their food security.

Age and ageism both can act as significant risk factors during this pandemic, increasing the physical as well as psychosocial burden on the elderly. A review was performed in relation to the psychosocial vulnerabilities of the older adults during the pandemic, with insights from the similar biological disasters in the past. Besides the physiological risk, morbidities, polypharmacy and increased case fatality rates, various social factors like lack of security, loneliness, isolation, ageism, sexism, dependency, stigma, abuse and restriction to health care access were identified as crucial in pandemic situation. Frailty, cognitive and sensory impairments added to the burden. Marginalization and human rights deprivation emerged as a common pathway of suffering for the elderly during COVID-19. The implications of the emerging themes are discussed in light of psychosocial wellbeing and impact on the quality of

Old people – A group with increased vulnerability during the COVID-19 pandemic life (D’cruz and Banerjee, 2020). They suggest potential recommendations to mitigate this marginalization on the lines of the World Health Organization’s concept of Healthy Aging and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Federman et al (2021) analyze homebound older adults are a highly vulnerable population, yet little is known about their experiences with healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic. Interviews covered social media, household activities, self-care, and medical care, and asked participants to compare current with prepandemic experiences. Disruptions in the home included greater difficulty accessing paid caregivers (13.9%) and food (35.3%) than before the pandemic, and unaddressed household chores (laundry, 81.4%; food preparation, 11.4%).

Findings of Knepple et al (2021) are consistent with the strength and vulnerability integration model, wherein older adults try to maintain positive emotional well-being, with middle-aged and older adults in the current study having experienced less negative impact on well-being . Middle-aged and older adults may be better able to regulate negative emotions from COVID-19 than younger adults. Strength and vulnerability integration proposes a greater negative impact on older adults when they experience sustained stressors; as the challenges with COVID-19 continue, further data will need to be examined.

Contrary to predominant messaging about the vulnerability of older adults, these findings highlight the resilient nature of older adults in terms of their psychological coping and adaptability during COVID-19 (Fuller and Huseth-Zosel, 2021). Future research should build upon these findings to better understand and promote late-life coping during crises. Practitioners should seek to support older adults ‘engagement in such proactive coping, and social policies should be developed to acknowledge the variable needs of older adults.

There is no doubt that age poses a greater risk for COVID-19 mortality. At the same time, there are incidental reports of centenarians, who recovered from COVID-19, and of younger adults, who have not.

Finally, the most vulnerable members of our society, including older adults in long-term care facilities and those with severe physical and cognitive impairments, face substantial threats to their autonomy, unrelated to the current outbreak. It is our duty to ensure that the autonomy of the most vulnerable members of society is not hampered and that their voices are heard. Older people's rights should not be compromised, and human rights should not be differentially allocated based on chronological age (Ayalon, 2020a).

Benksim et al (2020) analyze the fragility and vulnerability that expose old people to the danger of COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic is the main health and economic disaster of our time. Since its appearance in Asia, the virus has spread to all continents, causing many victims, essentially among the elderly. The countries reporting most deaths of COVID-19 are the United States (20608), Italy (19470), Spain (16353), France (13832), United Kingdom (9875). Nonetheless what all of these countries have in common is that they have experienced a high proportion of older people who need long-term care for life-threatening infections. A recent study found a high death rate in Italy and China in the elderly infected. The WHO reports also displayed that the elderly is characterized by the emergence of complex diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes and depression.

Case-fatality rate and characteristics of patients dying in relation to COVID-19 in Italy are analyzed by Onder et al (2020). Their current data illustrate that Italy has a high proportion of older patients with confirmed COVID-19 infection and that the older population in Italy may partly explain differences in cases and case-fatality rates among countries. Within Italy, COVID-19 deaths are mainly observed among older, male patients who also have multiple comorbidities. However, these data are limited and were derived from the first month of documented COVID-19 cases in Italy. In addition, some patients who are currently infected may die in the near future, which may change the mortality pattern. Finally, because the outbreak is new, continued surveillance, with transparent and accurate reporting of patient

Old people – A group with increased vulnerability during the COVID-19 pandemic characteristics and testing policies, is needed from multiple countries to better understand the global epidemiology of COVID-19.

The study of Bastani et al (2020) had as aim to explore factors affecting healthcare access and health service utilization for older people during the pandemic. Factors were identified at an individual, provider and systems level. Seven main themes emerged from the thematic analysis, as determinants of elderly's access and utilization of healthcare services during COVID-19 pandemic. These included: access to non-COVID related services, access to COVID-related services, literacy and education, accommodation challenges, perceived attitudes of aging, and policies and structures, and social determinants. Mental health and digital health services were identified as major issues influencing or contributing to or influencing older people's health during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also argue on the importance of a rounded view, as attention to a range of factors is vital for policy decisions towards sustainable care and equitable interventions for improving the health of older people.

Amongst the most robust consensus related to the COVID-19 disease is that the elderly are by far the most vulnerable population group. Hence, public authorities target older people in order to convince them to comply with preventive measures. However, it is still known little about older people's attitudes and compliance toward these measures. The research of Daoust (2020) provides the first thorough description of the most vulnerable population's attitudes and compliance in a comparative perspective; suggest that governments 'strategies toward elderly people are far from successful and shows that methodologically, we should be more cautious in treating age as having a linear effect on COVID-19 related outcomes.

## **Conclusions**

The analysis of the articles in the literature shows that the group of elderly people has an increased vulnerability during the pandemic. This

is not only due to the chronic associated diseases that the elderly present, but also to the serious consequences that the social isolation and the restrictions imposed on them to avoid the spread of the pandemic have on them.

All articles state in their conclusions that governments and relevant fora need to take into account the negative effects of global restrictions and provide support and assistance to the vulnerable population through sports and psychological support and assistance in overcoming the pandemic. All these considerations are absolutely necessary in order to continue to ensure the good physical and mental health of the population and especially of the elderly, who represent a population group with increased vulnerability.

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**Vulnerabilități în sistemul educațional –  
Elevii cu situația neîncheiată la învățătură**  
*Studiu privind elevii cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile,  
pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022, în județul Arad*

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În perioada martie – mai 2022, Centrul Județean de Resurse și Asistență Educațională Arad a realizat împreună cu Universitatea „Aurel Vlaicu” din Arad și cu acordul Inspectoratului Școlar Județean Arad un studiu privind elevii cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile, pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022, în vederea dezvoltării unor strategii de prevenire și combatere a absenteismului și abandonului școlar.

Mai exact, în prima fază, pentru care se realizează prezenta analiză, printr-un formular online, s-au colectat date despre acești elevi, fiind înregistrate cu ajutorul învățătorilor și a profesorilor diriginți, pentru fiecare elev identificat în parte:

- unitatea de învățământ cu personalitate juridică în care se află elevul,
- nivelul de învățământ,
- clasa,
- numele și prenumele,

- motivele amânării (neîncheierii situației școlare pe sem. I),
- șansele ca elevul în cauză să își încheie situația școlară până la sfârșitul anului școlar.

Baza de date astfel creată și ilustrarea statistică a stării de fapt la nivelul județului Arad reprezintă o necesitate în cunoașterea realităților și perspectivelor asupra fenomenului, a amplitudinii și intensității cu care acesta se manifestă și se poate dovedi utilă în contextul în care Ministerul Educației se află în plin proces de demarare și implementare a *Programului Național pentru Reducerea Abandonului Școlar (PNRAS)*, finanțat de *Planul Național pentru Redresare și Reziliență al României (PNRR)*. (vezi: <https://www.edu.ro/PNRR>)

Mulțumim colegilor învățători și profesori diriginți pentru implicare și totodată direcțiunilor unităților de învățământ care au răspuns rugăminții de a participa la realizarea studiului prin completarea formularelor și implicit transmiterea datelor solicitate.

Rezultatele studiului sunt puse la dispoziția Inspectoratului Școlar Județean Arad, precum și la dispoziția altor factori interesați de aceste rezultate. Analiza de față se completează cu alte analize și resurse elaborate de profesorii consilieri școlari din cadrul CJRAE Arad, venind în cursul unor preocupări constante ce vizează absenteismul, riscul de abandon școlar și abandonul școlar, la nivelul județului Arad.

Studiul s-a realizat pe toate unitățile de învățământ publice cu personalitate juridică de nivel primar, gimnazial și liceal din județul Arad.

*Conform SIIIR, la momentul studiului, rețeaua școlară din județul Arad cuprinde un număr total de 124 de unități de învățământ publice de interes național și local cu personalitate juridică cu nivel de învățământ primar, gimnazial și/sau liceal. Din acest total, au participat la studiu 121 de unități, deci aproape toate unitățile din rețea (97,6%).*

De remarcat faptul că în *Lista unităților de învățământ care au răspuns invitației de participare la PNRAS*<sup>1</sup>, publicată pe site-ul Ministerului Educației, sunt înscrise 95 de unități de învățământ cu personalitate juridică din județul Arad, iar în *Lista unităților de învățământ eligibile pentru Programul Național pentru Reducerea Abandonului Școlar*<sup>2</sup> figurează 82 de unități arădene.

Din aceste unități au fost selectate un număr de 40 de unități care vor beneficia de granturi, conform *Anexei la OME nr. 3496 din 30.03.2022*<sup>3</sup> și *listei finale după contestații*<sup>4</sup>.

***Tabelul de mai jos cuprinde unitățile care au participat la studiu și care se regăsesc și în Lista unităților de învățământ - runda 1 - în cadrul Schemei de granturi din Programul Național pentru Reducerea Abandonului Școlar (PNRAS), finanțat prin Planul Național pentru Redresare și Reziliență.***

**Tabelul 1:** Unitățile de învățământ participante care se regăsesc și în Lista unităților de învățământ - runda 1 - în cadrul Schemei de granturi din Programul Național pentru Reducerea Abandonului Școlar (PNRAS), finanțat prin Planul Național pentru Redresare și Reziliență - *ordonare după denumire* –

Nr. crt.	Unitatea de învățământ cu personalitate juridică participantă
1	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC "FRANCISC NEUMAN" ARAD
2	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC "ION CREANGĂ" CURTICI
3	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC "SAVA BRANCOVICI" INEU
4	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC VINGA
5	LICEUL TEORETIC "GHEORGHE LAZĂR" PECICA
6	LICEUL TEORETIC CERMEI
7	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "ADAM MULLER GUTTENBRUN" ZĂBRANI
8	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "ADAM NICOLAE" ARAD
9	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "AUREL SEBEȘAN" FELNAC

<sup>1</sup> [www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/Lista\\_unitati\\_invatamant\\_raspuns\\_invitatie\\_participare\\_PNRAS\\_0.pdf](http://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/Lista_unitati_invatamant_raspuns_invitatie_participare_PNRAS_0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/Lista%20unitati%20invatamant%20eligibile%20PNRAS\\_PNRR\\_0.pdf](http://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/Lista%20unitati%20invatamant%20eligibile%20PNRAS_PNRR_0.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/\\_fi%C8%99iere/Legislatie/2022/Anexa\\_OM\\_3496.pdf](https://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/_fi%C8%99iere/Legislatie/2022/Anexa_OM_3496.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/\\_fi%C8%99iere/Minister/2022/PNRR/PNRAS/lista\\_finala\\_runda\\_1\\_PNRAS\\_2022.pdf](https://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/_fi%C8%99iere/Minister/2022/PNRR/PNRAS/lista_finala_runda_1_PNRAS_2022.pdf)

Nr. crt.	Unitatea de învățământ cu personalitate juridică participantă
10	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "AVRAM IANCU" ARAD
11	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "CORNELIU MICLOȘI" COVĂȘANȚ
12	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "EMIL MONȚIA" ȘICULA
13	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "GABRIEL BROLA" BUTENI
14	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "GHEORGHE POPOVICI" APATEU
15	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "ILARION FELEA" ARAD
16	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "IOAN SLAVICI" ȘIRIA
17	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "IOSIF MOLDOVAN" ARAD
18	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "IUSTIN MARȘIEU" SOCODOR
19	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "PATRICHE POPESCU" BATA
20	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "PAVEL COVACI" MACEA
21	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "SABIN MANUIȚĂ" SÎMBĂTENI
22	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "ȘTEFAN CICIO-POP" CONOP
23	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "TABAZDI KAROLY" ZERIND
24	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "TEODOR PĂCĂȚIAN" USUSĂU
25	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ AGRISU MARE
26	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ BÂRZAVA
27	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ CĂRAND
28	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ CRAIVA
29	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ FÂNTÂNELE
30	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ FISCUT
31	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ FRUMUȘENI
32	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ HĂȘMAȘ
33	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ IRATOȘU
34	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ NR 2 PECICA
35	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ PĂULIȘ
36	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ PILU
37	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ SÂNTANA
38	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ SECUSIGIU
39	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ ȘIMAND
40	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ VÂNĂTORI

Indicatorii care definesc gradul de (risc) de abandon școlar și părăsire timpurie a școlii sau nivelul de risc pe unitatea de învățământ folosiți în *Mecanismul de Avertizare Timpurie în Educație (MATE)* și *Metodologia de implementare și utilizare a modulului informatic MATE pentru prevenirea abandonului școlar și a părăsirii timpurii a școlii* diferă în mod semnificativ de cel utilizat în studiu. Prin studiu s-au colectat date doar pentru acei elevi cărora nu li s-a putut încheia situația școlară la niciuna dintre disciplinele de studiu, pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022.

## Datele raportate din școli - NUMĂR DE CAZURI

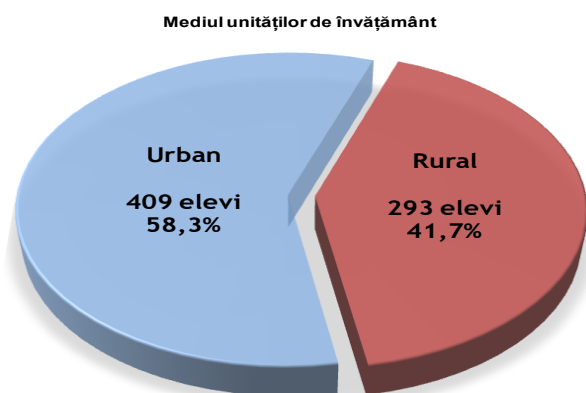
Conform datelor raportate de unitățile de învățământ participante, la momentul realizării studiului, la nivelul județului Arad sunt identificați un **NUMĂR TOTAL DE 702 ELEV** cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile, pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022.

### Situația pe mediul urban / rural

Astfel cum se prezintă în tabelul și graficul de mai jos, **409 elevi** (reprezentând 58,3%) din totalul de 702 sunt identificați în unități de învățământ aflate în mediul urban, iar **293 de elevi** (41,7%) în unități de învățământ aflate în mediul rural.

**Tabelul 2:** Numărul de elevi cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile, pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022, după mediul urban / rural în care se află unitățile de învățământ participante

Mediul	Nr. de elevi	Procente
Urban	409	58.3
Rural	293	41.7
Total	702	100



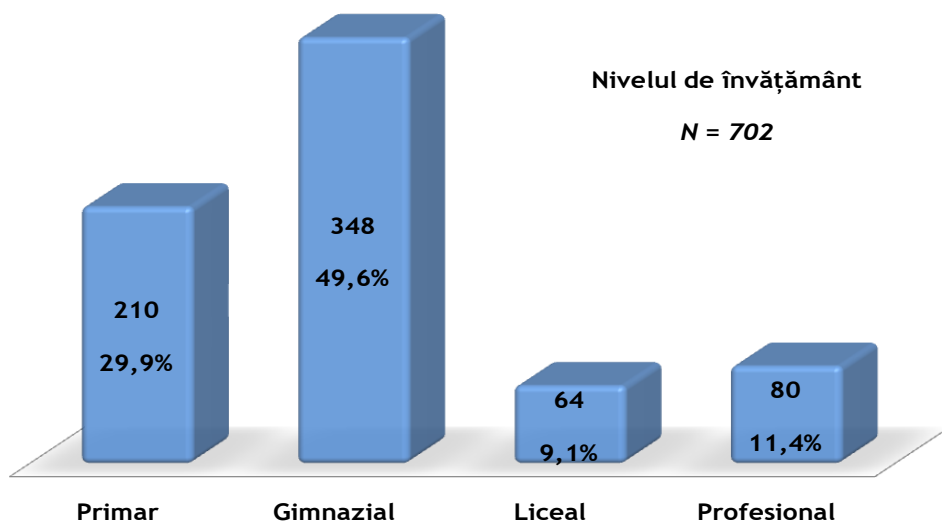
**Graficul 1:** Numărul de elevi cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile, pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022, după mediul urban / rural în care se află unitățile de învățământ participante – N = 702

### Situația pe niveluri de învățământ

În tabelul și graficul de mai jos se prezintă datele înregistrate pe nivelurile de învățământ.

**Tabelul 3:** Numărul de elevi cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile, pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022, după nivelul de învățământ

Nivelul de învățământ	Nr. de elevi	Procente	Procente cumulate
Învățământ primar (clasa pregătitoare și clasele I-IV)	210	29.9	29.9
Învățământ secundar inferior sau gimnazial (clasele V-VIII)	348	49.6	79.5
Învățământ secundar superior LICEAL (clasele IX—XII/XIII)	64	9.1	88.6
Învățământ secundar superior PROFESIONAL (de minimum 3 ani)	80	11.4	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>100</b>	



**Graficul 2:** Numărul de elevi cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile, pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022, după nivelul de învățământ; N = 702

**Tabelul 4:** Asocierea dintre mediul în care se află unitățile de învățământ participante și nivelul de învățământ al elevilor cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile, pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022

Mediul	Nivelul de învățământ				Total
	Primar	Gimnazial	Liceal	Profesional	
Urban	121	154	57	77	409
Rural	89	194	7	3	293
Total	210	348	64	80	702

### Situația pe clase

După cum se poate observa în tabelul de mai jos, apare un salt al numărului de elevi la trecerea dintre nivelul primar de învățământ și cel gimnazial. Mai precis, sunt raportați 118 elevi de clasa a V-a care au situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile, pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022, față de o medie de 42 de elevi per nivel clasă de învățământ primar.

De asemenea, se observă că majoritatea cazurilor înregistrate, mai exact 79,5% elevi din totalul de 702, sunt de până la nivelul gimnazial inclusiv.

90,5% din totalul elevilor cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022 sunt elevi aflați în învățământul obligatoriu.

**Tabelul 5:** Numărul de elevi cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile, pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022, după clasele în care sunt înscriși

Clasa	Nr. de elevi	Procente	Procente cumulate
Clasa pregătitoare	29	4.1	4.1
Clasa a I-a	48	6.8	11
Clasa a II-a	53	7.5	18.5
Clasa a III-a	39	5.6	24.1
Clasa a IV-a	41	5.8	29.9
Clasa a V-a	118	16.8	46.7
Clasa a VI-a	84	12	58.7

Clasa	Nr. de elevi	Procente	Procente cumulate
Clasa a VII-a	79	11.3	69.9
Clasa a VIII-a	67	9.5	79.5
Clasa a IX-a	49	7	86.5
Clasa a X-a	28	4	90.5
Clasa a XI-a	30	4.3	94.7
Clasa a XII-a	15	2.1	96.9
Clasa a XIII-a	7	1	97.9
Nu se specifică clasa	9	1.3	99.1
Anul I	2	0.3	99.4
Anul II	1	0.1	99.6
Anul III	3	0.4	100
Total	702	100	

În ceea ce privește asocierea dintre mediul unității de învățământ și clasă (vezi tabelul de mai jos) este de remarcat faptul că aproape toți elevii de clasă pregătitoare (28 de elevi) raportați cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022 aparțin de școli aflate în mediul urban.

De asemenea, de remarcat și faptul că majoritatea elevilor de nivel liceal și profesional cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022 provin tot din unități de învățământ aflate în mediul urban. Spre deosebire însă de cazul celor din clasa pregătitoare, aici explicația ar fi aceea că, exceptând doar câteva unități, în rest toate unitățile de nivel liceal sunt situate în mediul urban.

Elevii cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022 din clasele gimnaziale se împart în mod echilibrat pe cele două medii (urban/rural), dar pentru o imagine reală aceste date ar trebui calculate ca pondere din totalurile de elevi înscriși în prezent în respectivele clase (se subînțelege totaluri care includ și elevii cu situația școlară încheiată), mai ales pentru situația în care

există o diferență semnificativă între totalul de elevi din urban față de totalul de elevi din rural.

**Tabelul 6:** Asocierea dintre mediul în care se află unitățile de învățământ participante și clasele elevilor cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022

Clasa	Mediul		Total
	Rural	Urban	
Clasa pregătitoare	1	28	29
Clasa a I-a	28	20	48
Clasa a II-a	28	25	53
Clasa a III-a	18	21	39
Clasa a IV-a	14	27	41
Clasa a V-a	63	55	118
Clasa a VI-a	44	40	84
Clasa a VII-a	46	33	79
Clasa a VIII-a	41	26	67
Clasa a IX-a	2	47	49
Clasa a X-a	1	27	28
Clasa a XI-a	3	27	30
Clasa a XII-a	4	11	15
Clasa a XIII-a	0	7	7
Anul I	0	2	2
Anul II	0	1	1
Anul III	0	3	3
Nu specifică clasa	0	9	9
Total	293	409	702

### Motivele amânării (neîncheierii situației)

Pentru majoritatea elevilor cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022 (78,2% din totalul de 702 elevi) motivul amânării este acela că au absentat, motivat și

nemotivat, la cel puțin 50% din numărul de ore de curs prevăzut într-un semestru la disciplinele/modulele respective.

**Tabelul 7: Motivele amânării (neîncheierii situației)**

Motivele amânării (neîncheierii situației)	Nr. de elevi	Procente	Procente cumulate
A absentat, motivat și nemotivat, la cel puțin 50% din numărul de ore de curs prevăzut într-un semestru la disciplinele/modulele respective.	549	78,2	78,2
<i>Alte motive</i>	65	9,3	87,5
A absentat, motivat și nemotivat, la cel puțin 50% din numărul de ore de curs prevăzut într-un semestru la disciplinele/modulele respective <b>SI</b> Nu are un număr suficient de calitative/note, necesar pentru încheierea mediei/mediilor sau nu are calitativele/mediile semestriale ori anuale la disciplinele/modulele respective, consemnate în catalog de către cadrul didactic, din alte motive decât cele de mai sus, neimputabile personalului didactic de predare.	55	7,8	95,3
Nu are un număr suficient de calitative/note, necesar pentru încheierea mediei/mediilor sau nu are calitativele/mediile semestriale ori anuale la disciplinele/modulele respective, consemnate în catalog de către cadrul didactic, din alte motive decât cele de mai sus, neimputabile personalului didactic de predare.	17	2,4	97,7
A urmat studiile, pentru o perioadă determinată de timp, în alte țări.	16	2,3	100
Total	702	100	

Referitor la cei 65 de elevi cu alte motive, pentru 25 dintre ei se precizează faptul că sunt plecați în străinătate, iar pentru restul sunt specificate diverse alte motive precum cele legate de problemele de sănătate, căsătorie, însărcinarea și nașterea de copii, neprezentarea la școală sau nefrecventarea școlii, urmarea unei forme de învățământ

diferite de cea acreditată publică de stat, plecarea din localitate, problemele familiale ori nota la purtare.

### Șansele încheierii situației școlare

Profesorii diriginți și învățătorii care au transmis datele au fost rugați să aprecieze care sunt șansele ca elevii pe care i-au raportat să își încheie situația școlară. Răspunsurile sunt următoarele:

**Tabelul 8:** Șansele încheierii situației școlare

Din cunoștințele dumneavoastră, apreciați că elevul / eleva în cauză are șanse ca până la sfârșitul acestui an școlar să își încheie situația școlară?	Nr. de elevi	Procente	Procente cumulate
NU, nu sunt șanse (cel puțin în acest moment) să își încheie situația școlară.	478	68,1	68,1
Nu știu / Nu pot aprecia	157	22,4	90,5
DA, sunt șanse să își încheie situația școlară.	67	9,5	100
Total	702	100	

Pentru 478 de elevi profesorii diriginți și învățătorii apreciază că cel puțin în acest moment nu sunt șanse să își încheie situația școlară, iar pentru 157 nu știu sau nu pot aprecia.

Doar pentru 67 de elevi profesorii diriginți și învățătorii apreciază că sunt șanse ca aceștia să își încheie situația școlară.

**Tabelul 9:** Asocierea dintre nivelul de învățământ al elevilor și șansele ca aceștia să își încheie situația școlară

Nivelul de învățământ	Din cunoștințele dumneavoastră, apreciați că elevul / eleva în cauză are șanse ca până la sfârșitul acestui an școlar să își încheie situația școlară?			Total
	DA, sunt șanse	Nu știu / Nu pot aprecia	NU, nu sunt șanse	
Învățământ primar (clasa pregătitoare și clasele I-IV)	18	58	134	210
Învățământ secundar inferior sau gimnazial (clasele V-VIII)	36	77	235	348

Nivelul de învățământ	Din cunoștințele dumneavoastră, apreciați că elevul / eleva în cauză are șanse ca până la sfârșitul acestui an școlar să își încheie situația școlară?			Total
	DA, sunt șanse	Nu știu / Nu pot aprecia	NU, nu sunt șanse	
Învățământ secundar superior LICEAL (clasele IX – XII/XIII)	7	8	49	64
Învățământ secundar superior PROFESIONAL (cu durată de minimum 3 ani)	6	14	60	80
Total	67	157	478	702

**Tabelul 10:** Totalurile elevilor cu situația școlară neîncheiată la toate materiile pe semestrul I al anului școlar 2021-2022 pe unități de învățământ

#### NUMĂRUL DE ELEVI PE UNITĂȚI DE ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNT

Nr. crt.	Unitatea de învățământ cu personalitate juridică	Nr. de elevi	Procente	Procente cumulate
1	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "ILARION FELEA" ARAD	51	7,3	7,3
2	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC "FRANCISC NEUMAN" ARAD	46	6,6	13,8
3	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "IOSIF MOLDOVAN" ARAD	41	5,8	19,7
4	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "IOAN SLAVICI" ȘIRIA	32	4,6	24,2
5	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC "ION CREANGĂ" CURTICI	29	4,1	28,3
6	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC VINGA	29	4,1	32,5
7	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC CHIȘINEU CRIȘ	25	3,6	36,0
8	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "ADAM NICOLAE" ARAD	25	3,6	39,6
9	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ ȘIMAND	25	3,6	43,2
10	COLEGIUL "MIHAI VITEAZUL" INEU	22	3,1	46,3
11	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC DE TRANSPORTURI AUTO "HENRI COANDĂ" ARAD	22	3,1	49,4
12	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ SÂNTANA	21	3,0	52,4
13	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ VÂNĂTORI	20	2,8	55,3
14	LICEUL "ATANASIE MARIENESCU" LIPOVA	16	2,3	57,5
15	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "PAVEL COVACI" MACEA	16	2,3	59,8
16	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ NR 2 PECICA	14	2,0	61,8
17	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC "AUREL VLAICU" ARAD	13	1,9	63,7
18	LICEUL TEORETIC "GHEORGHE LAZĂR" PECICA	13	1,9	65,5
19	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ GRĂNICERI	12	1,7	67,2
20	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "MIHAI VELICIU" SEPREUȘ	11	1,6	68,8
21	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ ZĂRAND	11	1,6	70,4
22	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC "IULIU MOLDOVAN" ARAD	9	1,3	71,7
23	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "AUREL SEBEȘAN" FELNAC	8	1,1	72,8
24	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "DR. IOAN DANICICO" SEMLAC	8	1,1	73,9
25	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "GHEORGHE POPOVICI" APATEU	8	1,1	75,1
26	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ SECUSIGIU	8	1,1	76,2
27	COLEGIUL "CSIKY GERGELY" ARAD	7	1,0	77,2
28	LICEUL "IOAN BUTEANU" GURAHONȚ	7	1,0	78,2
29	LICEUL TEORETIC "MIHAI VELICIU" CHISINEU-CRIS	7	1,0	79,2

Nr. crt.	Unitatea de învățământ cu personalitate juridică	Nr. de elevi	Procente	Procente cumulate
30	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ CRAIVA	7	1,0	80,2
31	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "ȘTEFAN BOZIAN" ȘEITIN	6	,9	81,1
32	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "ȘTEFAN CICIO-POP" CONOP	6	,9	81,9
33	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "TABAZDI KAROLY" ZERIND	6	,9	82,8
34	COLEGIUL ECONOMIC ARAD	5	,7	83,5
35	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ OLARI	5	,7	84,2
36	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ ȚIPAR	5	,7	84,9
37	COLEGIUL NAȚIONAL "MOISE NICOARĂ" ARAD	4	,6	85,5
38	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC "SAVA BRANCOVICI" INEU	4	,6	86,0
39	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC "ȘTEFAN HELL" SÂNTANA	4	,6	86,6
40	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC BELIU	4	,6	87,2
41	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC DE CONSTRUCȚII ȘI PROTECȚIA MEDIULUI ARAD	4	,6	87,7
42	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC DE ELECTRONICĂ ȘI AUTOMATIZĂRI "CAIUS IACOB" ARAD	4	,6	88,3
43	LICEUL TEORETIC SEBIȘ	4	,6	88,9
44	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "CORNELIU MICLOȘI" COVĂȘĂNT	4	,6	89,5
45	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "SABIN MANUILĂ" SÎMBĂTENI	4	,6	90,0
46	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ FISCUT	4	,6	90,6
47	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ VLADIMIRESCU	4	,6	91,2
48	CENTRUL ȘCOLAR PENTRU EDUCAȚIE INCLUZIVĂ ARAD	3	,4	91,6
49	LICEUL CU PROGRAM SPORTIV ARAD	3	,4	92,0
50	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "GABRIEL BROLA" BUTENI	3	,4	92,5
51	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "MORA FERENC" ZIMANDU NOU	3	,4	92,9
52	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "REGINA MARIA" ARAD	3	,4	93,3
53	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "SIMONYI IMRE" SATU NOU	3	,4	93,7
54	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ AGRISU MARE	3	,4	94,2
55	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ FRUMUȘENI	3	,4	94,6
56	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ VÂRFURILE	3	,4	95,0
57	LICEUL TEHNOLOGIC "MOGA VOIEVOD" HĂLMAGIU	2	,3	95,3
58	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "ANDREI ȘAGUNA" ANDREI ȘAGUNA	2	,3	95,6
59	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "ARON COTRUȘ" ARAD	2	,3	95,9
60	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "IUSTIN MARȘIEU" SOCODOR	2	,3	96,2
61	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "NICOLAE BĂLCESCU" ARAD	2	,3	96,4
62	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "VASILE POP" BOCSIG	2	,3	96,7
63	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ HĂȘMAȘ	2	,3	97,0
64	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ SINTEA MARE	2	,3	97,3
65	COLEGIUL NAȚIONAL "ELENA GHIBA BIRTA" ARAD	1	,1	97,4
66	COLEGIUL NAȚIONAL "PREPARANDIA-DIMITRIE ȚICHINDEAL" ARAD	1	,1	97,6
67	LICEUL "SEVER BOCU" LIPOVA	1	,1	97,7
68	LICEUL TEOLGIC PENTICOSTAL ARAD	1	,1	97,9
69	LICEUL TEORETIC "ADAM MULLER GUTTENBRUNN" ARAD	1	,1	98,0
70	LICEUL TEORETIC CERMEI	1	,1	98,1
71	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "ADAM MULLER GUTTENBRUNN" ZĂBRANI	1	,1	98,3
72	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "CAIUS IACOB" ARAD	1	,1	98,4

# Vulnerabilities in social assistance

Nr. crt.	Unitatea de învățământ cu personalitate juridică	Nr. de elevi	Procent-te	Procente cumulate
73	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "CRISTIAN HERBEI" VĂRĂDIA DE MUREȘ	1	,1	98,6
74	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "EMIL MONȚIA" ȘICULA	1	,1	98,7
75	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "OLOSZ LAJOS" ADEA	1	,1	98,9
76	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "PATRICHE POPESCU" BATA	1	,1	99,0
77	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ "TEODOR PĂCĂȚIAN" USUSĂU	1	,1	99,1
78	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ FÂNTÂNELE	1	,1	99,3
79	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ HĂLMĂGEL	1	,1	99,4
80	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ IACOBINI	1	,1	99,6
81	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ PĂULIȘ	1	,1	99,7
82	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ PLEȘCUȚA	1	,1	99,9
83	ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ ZĂDĂRENI	1	,1	100
Total		702	100	

# **Readiness of future primary school teachers, regarding outdoor education teaching. A study case**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to investigate the level of readiness of future preschool teachers regarding the teaching of outdoor learning activities in classes. Using the questionnaire, we have drawn the recent theory and research of primary school curriculum that outlines the necessity of outdoor education in primary school. This tool shows the exact elements that are present in the Romanian school curriculum, regarding the presence of outdoor educational activities at every level of primary school, covering all subjects. We have used the questionnaire to investigate the level in which actual students from "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, from the specialty: Primary and preschool pedagogy are ready to enter schools, embracing their careers, and to introduce outdoor activities on a weekly basis. This has given statistic results regarding their professional training and also regarding the process of self-evaluation which led to the realistic image in which, the Faculty of Educational Sciences, prepares its students in terms of teaching outdoor education.

**Keywords:** *outdoor learning, readiness, students, curriculum, primary school.*

## Introduction

Although outdoor education is a relatively new concept in Romanian education, it is progressively capturing the attention of educational players in the formal school system. Outside education has numerous definitions, but to give a simple explanation, we may say that it is a form of education that is based on outdoor learning. Environmental education, leisure activities, personal and social development programs, hiking, adventure, and other activities are all examples of outdoor education. (Bilton, 2010) Outdoor education allows students to have direct touch with nature; environmental protection is a global concern; mass urbanization has a negative influence on the environment; and people are unaware of the environmental impact of their non-ecological actions - outdoor education can help. Outdoor education is a powerful source of learning experience - a relaxing, free environment without the guidance required by the walls of a classroom can offer students countless challenges, so the educational process becomes powerful, inspiring and natural. to change antisocial behaviors, to create a strong relationship between people based on mutual support. (Bundy, 2014)

Outdoor education helps the learning process for kids with disabilities; it provides a distinct learning environment that allows pupils who typically struggle with learning and have poor school performance to become more motivated and capable. Outdoor education not only contributes to the personal development of those who apply and, in particular, students, but it also facilitates the development of team spirit, the connection between students, and student-teachers, which leads to increased active participation and citizenship among both groups. Outdoor education has numerous physical, emotional, and mental benefits that contribute to society's well-being. Most of the time, the

education received at school has a theoretical and also cognitive aspect. (Chiş, 2002) Teachers have a busy schedule and too little time to teach a large class. In outdoor education, children learn everything in a practical, active way, through personal experiences that they then reflect on in order to extract the teachings. This way of learning is called experiential learning. (Cerghit, 2002)

### **Theoretical foundation**

In the pre-university education system in Romania, there are attempts, at least at the curriculum level, to combine formal and non-formal education types, by introducing subjects such as: "Game and movement" in primary education, for example. (Bocoş, 2002)

Universities, especially by the faculties that are specialized on primary and preschool education, have to follow the trends of pre-university education in order to prepare its students in a qualitative way in order for these to be ready to use modern teaching and learning strategies based on the needs of pupils. (Ciolan, 2008)

Outdoor education is intended for all teachers who want to incorporate outdoor classes into their curriculum. Nature is being discovered as a learning space more than ever before, and we are beginning to wonder how we can best use the school yard so that children can learn safely. Students will learn about outdoor education principles that can be used in the classroom, how to plan a lesson so that nature can be used to achieve the learning objectives, and what they need to do in order to transform the school yard so that they can have classes outside. And, because the current situation has brought us to an online environment to learn about this topic, we recommend that you go for a walk in nature before, whether it's in a garden, a park, or the woods, and answer the question of what nature has to offer. (Torkos & Egerău, 2020)

The Nordic education systems show us that for a well-being learning we need exposure in the natural environment, in the spirit of

pure curiosity and under the sign of questions and appeals, without too many delimitations. Outdoor education is complementary to formal education, the two together can lead to qualitative learning outcomes.

Outdoor education, best fits non-formal instruction, since like this, open air training depends intensely on dynamic support, amplifies the learning system, limits school-explicit imperatives, gives prompt useful utility to the information learned, happens in various settings with a learning structure and simple substance, utilizes strategies that invigorate association and investment, has an adaptable design and arranging, the learning system is member situated, depends on the experience of the members. (Tovey, 2007) Both non-formal and outdoor education can be successfully integrated into formal education in order to maximize the effects of the learning process, the current trend is to amplify the two forms, especially because embedded, they lead to a much more valuable in terms of quality, produce long-term benefits, cover a wide range of disciplines and most importantly, the educational act focuses equally on those who implement it (especially teachers) and those who are subject to learning (in this case the students). (Dughi & Roman, 2009) (Roman & Balaş, 2009)

Depending on the chosen activities, the objectives of an Outdoor Education program can be part of any of these three categories. Thus, students can learn more about:

- ✓ the environment in which we carry out our activity, the relations between its components and how they can contribute to its protection;
  - ✓ your own person, your own limits and how you can overcome them;
  - ✓ effective communication and collaboration within a group.
- (Cucoş, 2008)

## **Outdoor education and its presence in the training of future primary school teachers. A study case.**

The lasting change we all want in education begins with each of us. Each of the educators, teachers and professors want to build better relationships with their students, to be more efficient, better prepared for the multitude of situations they face every day, while not forgetting that they are a role model for their students. University Aurel Vlaicu of Arad, through its Faculty of Primary and Preschool Pedagogy specialty, wishes to be one of the best performing education systems, willing to be able to adapt and apply this successful approach in Romania as well. (Breaz, 2020)

The Faculty of Education Sciences, Psychology and Social Work is one of the nine faculties of the "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad participating in the development of the organizational culture of the university. The institutional becoming of the faculty capitalizes on the pedagogical tradition of Arad and is initially constituted in the University Pedagogical College of Teachers which functioned on the basis of GD 410 / 25.04.2002 until its transformation in 2005 into the Faculty of Education Sciences and Social Assistance by Government Decision. The main mission is to contribute, through the study programs offered, through research and development projects and through those of social responsibility, to the initial and continuous training of highly qualified specialists and to the advancement of scientific research in the fields of psychology and education sciences, as well as social and community development. ([www.uav.ro](http://www.uav.ro))

Some of the directions of action are in accordance with the assumed mission and with the requirements included in the methodology of evaluation of the study programs by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, such as:

- ✓ continuous training of specialists in the field of education, psychology and social work sciences to be open to knowledge and professional mobility;

- ✓ promoting cooperative relations with students, graduates and the socio-economic environment;
- ✓ modernization and permanent updating of study programs, at bachelor's and master's level.

The main objectives of the faculty are:

- ✓ diversifying the profile and specializations of the faculty in accordance with the local, zonal needs and the respective National Qualifications Framework;
- ✓ periodic revision of the Curricula and of the Course Cards in accordance with the internal and international standards;
- ✓ covering all subjects in the curriculum with volumes, course materials and practical work guides;
- ✓ training young teachers in the activity of scientific research and improvement through postgraduate courses.

In order to achieve all the criteria mentioned above, the faculty, have introduced into the educational plans, the subject: Teaching methodology of outdoor education in preschool and primary school. This subject, is being thought by well-prepared teachers, in the country and above, who are specialists in the area of outdoor education. The educational activities, are not just about theoretical foundations and basic elements of outdoor education, but about giving the possibility to get practically involved in planning and conducting outdoor educational activities at al preschool and primary school levels. (Roman, 2016) Students can also participate in the designing activities of school yards, in order to allow pupils to develop certain skills by practicing outdoor education at the most qualitative level.

The faculty, organizes every year, workshops for students as future teachers, in which they can get prepared for the teaching of outdoor educational activities in schools. There, they can practice, ask questions, get in touch with professionals, do research and also listen to presentations and photo-works of colleagues who have already got involved actively in the outdoor educational practice.

## Research methodology

During this stage, the real and objective situation of the readiness of future primary school teachers, regarding outdoor education teaching was analyzed. At this stage, a questionnaire was applied, for students as future preschool and primary teachers, indicating the level of readiness about the given concept, the degree of instruction they receive within the faculty courses and the level of knowledge they have regarding the theory and practice of outdoor education.

The items of the questionnaire aimed at an algorithm that measures around three components for each type of content, respectively components aimed at: knowledge, attitude, experience. The other data that appear in the questionnaire are personal and identifying information of the students' participants, gender, age, the school level they to work in and the specialization they have.

Given the purpose of the study, the items were developed in accordance with the two major topics of interest: outdoor education and readiness of students. The items were designed keeping the same objective structure, using different scales. The first items refer to the knowledge and familiarity with the concept, how and where it came into contact with this concept and where it might be placed as a nuance. These questions are important because we wanted to know the level of knowledge here, and even if at first glance they seem to be superficial questions, we consider the area of operation to be important, namely what are the environments in which teachers can come into contact with new concepts. (Torkos, 2021)

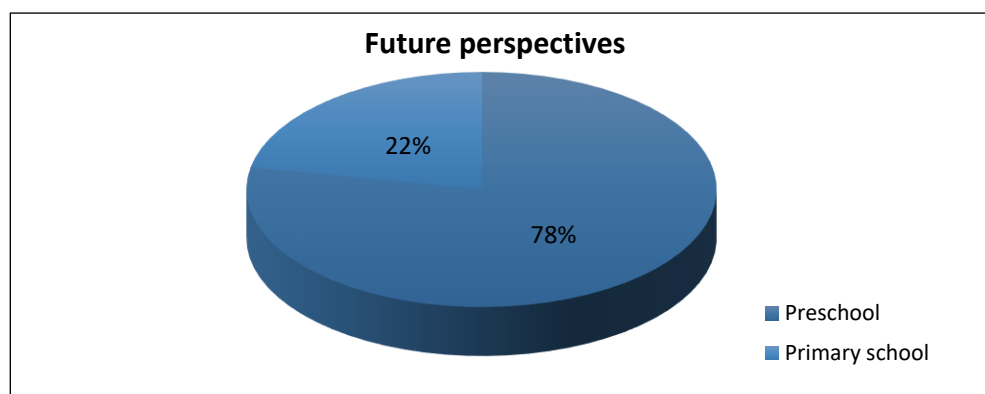
A number of 174 students from the specialty: Primary and preschool pedagogy, answered the questionnaire. Of these, the gender distribution was: 14 males and 160 females. The participants were from second and third year of study, after going through the one semester outdoor education course.

The average age of the respondents is 20 years, the minimum age is 19 years and the maximum age of the respondents is 52 years. Most respondents are between the ages of 19 and 23.

## Results

A number of 23 students have confessed that they already work as assistant teachers in preschools and primary schools, but they are not yet qualified to work as full-time teachers.

The respondents have stated that in proportion of 78% they are decided to work in preschools, and 22% are decided to work as primary school teachers.

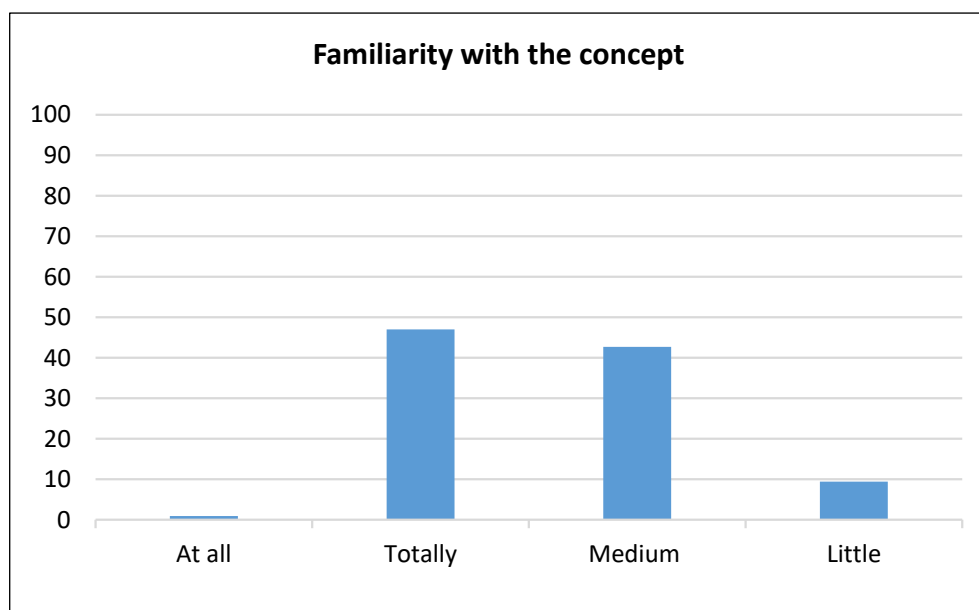


**Figure 1.** Future choices of students

Regarding the knowledge of students on outdoor education, as it was seen during practice, it can be said that it is varied. We consider this positive because, at this stage of preliminary study, it is interesting the real situation in which outdoor education is practiced in Arad educational units, at anything, radiographing the whole system, so that later we cannot approach what is of interest. This is necessary because good practices may or may not have continuity with the evolution of higher cycles. At the same time, it is important to know whether the use

of outdoor education is easier to do or not with the advancement to the upper classes, it facilitates not to approach, in the style of teachers, to collaborate or even non-collaboration at the higher level.

We were very interested in the level of familiarity of students with the concept of education outside the classroom, and the answers appear in the following diagram:



**Figure 2.** Student's familiarity with the concept

Following the analysis of these results, it can be stated that most respondents consider that they are familiar, to some extent, with the concept of outdoor education. Following the training of teachers in this regard, respondents admitted that they had erroneous information and knowledge about the concept and what this type of education entails. One person considered that they did not know the concept at all, but most of them stated that they totally know what it is about.

Another variable under analysis would be the way in which students came into contact with this concept. The results of the preliminary study show that most respondents came to know the concept

through the courses that they have attended in faculty. A smaller number of students claim to have come into contact with the concept through a book or journal, which reveals the need for research in this area. Only 3 people specified that the television had provided them with information on this subject.

The following variable analyzes the permissiveness of students in relation to the time given to children in nature. This variable measures their openness to the idea of extending the classroom in nature, the outdoor environment or even the school yard, in their future career. This is important because if there is no openness to spend time with pupils outside, there will be no openness to organizing outdoor activities. The teacher can observe the students' behavior while they are exposed to the external environment, even during breaks or play. The interactions that develop between them can be valuable indicators of the level, communication, strengths or weaknesses of the group. These indices provide new ways of group management, which will lead to better group homogeneity and better school results. Most of the respondent students claim that they surely are going to have at least 1 outdoor educational activity every week. Not a student stated that they are not going to use outdoor educational activities at all.

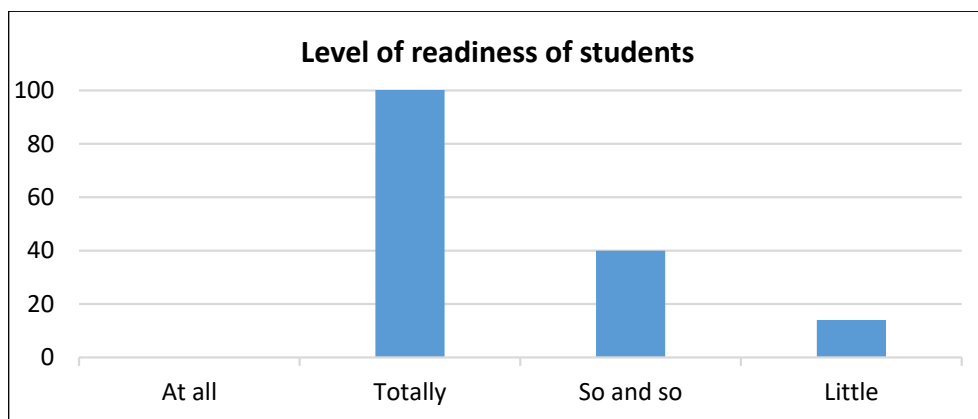
The following variable measured the interest of participating in further activities, personal training courses in this regard. More than half of the respondent's state that they are interested in personal training activities in the sense of outdoor education as a completion of courses offered by the faculty and workshops organized also by the faculty. They are closely followed by almost 40% of students who say they are very interested in developing in this direction. This result should be a motivating factor for the inspectorates, who can use the most convenient way to approach the outdoor topic, under the auspices of pedagogical circles.

The following two variables tested the level of confidence given to the method following two distinct criteria: the level of assimilation of

knowledge and the level of training of transversal skills and life skills. On average, students are more confident that the outdoor method develops transversal skills and life skills, than that it helps to assimilate theoretical content and information. This may mean that the method is given the status of a modern experiential learning method that develops the individual from a multilateral perspective and not just in terms of assimilating information that may be lost or never put into practice. In both cases, students, as future teachers, place a high degree of confidence in the method, in both senses and would like to use it as much as possible in their activities.

Another question used was regarding the trust level in the method and also the challenges they think may stop them using outdoor education in the future. The level of trust is severely affected by a lack of space or resources. It is true that the outdoor method mainly uses resources that are found in nature or in the outdoor environment, be it strictly natural elements or even buildings and various areas that become learning tools. The natural elements can be combined with those in the class, complementing each other so that the results are as true as possible. Even though these facts are known and together make the method accessible anytime, anywhere, teachers' concern is grounded in space and space accessibility, as well as the flexibility to leave the classroom to provide useful learning experiences and safe. The response to this variable raises alarm signals regarding the need to modernize educational spaces by making them more efficient, and the outdoor spaces to become extensions of the classroom, the two spaces easily interchanging.

Among the questions used, there was the one that questions the readiness of students and the level in which they feel prepared and secure that they can conduct and plan and organize outdoor educational activities for their future classes. The results are shown in the following graphic:



**Figure 3.** Student's readiness to conduct and plan outdoor educational activities

As it can be seen in the graphic presented, a number of 120 students consider that they are completely ready, zero students have stated that are not all ready, which can show that classes were useful and well prepared. Those 14 students that have stated that feel so and so ready, are also the ones that have missed the great majority of the courses.

One of the questions was if they consider they got all the resources necessary in order to get to complete knowledge and practice regarding the concept, and 97% of the students have responded that they have been given from teachers all that was necessary in order to develop successfully in the outdoor educational practices. They have also stated that they have been given contacts of school where their help is needed regarding the design of outdoor educational spaces, and also a list of sources where they can inspire their planning activities.

## Conclusions

The present research aimed the investigation of the extent to which students from "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad from Primary and preschool pedagogy specialization are given the necessary tools to be ready to implement outdoor educational teaching and learning strategies in their future careers. Also, from a theoretical point of view, it investigated the extent to which this type of education is practiced in

formal education in Romania as well as the degree and form in which outdoor education is used in the Romanian curriculum.

The results of the study have shown that students that participate at the courses offered by the faculty, are ready and willing to implement outdoor educational activities, to design playgrounds and transform them into outdoor learning places, to plan and conduct activities, to do research and to participate in follow-up activities, to collaborate with colleagues in order to get even more involved in the process. The results show that the faculty gives enough motivation and resources, also creates specific situation, such as workshops and gatherings where students not only can learn, but also, they can share and present their experiences regarding outdoor educational practices.

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# **Vulnerabilities of children whose parents are working abroad. Results of an empirical study on migrant parents**

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**Abstract:** The phenomenon of children left alone at home is one of the fastest growing phenomena that our society will face. The article highlights the effects that parents' departure abroad has on their children and the feelings they have, which often remain unheard and unseen. Being overwhelmed by the many problems they face in their daily lives due to poverty, lack of jobs, precarious financial situations, parents often forget the needs of their children, being concerned only to meet the material needs by putting in second place the affective ones. This article is presenting, in synthesis, results of an empirical research among adults, who had at least one person from the family who was or have been abroad to work. The questions that we are presenting in this study are focusing on two important aspects, which can be seen also as important effects of parents' migration: school results and psychological effects on children left "at home".

**Keywords:** *external migration, social effects, psychological effects, children, parents.*

## **1. Context. Conceptual delimitations**

Migration is one of the social phenomena that have left their mark on today's society, with millions of Romanian citizens having at least one relative who wanted or even migrated (Anghel & Horvath, 2009: 13-14). The studies of the sociology of migration, elaborated in the last 15 years, are extremely justified, starting, first of all, from the argument that the migration of Romanians is the most important migration to Western Europe, after 1990, that it is a process still in progress. development, a process that has many dimensions and generates many effects at the level of all social subsystems.

Migration is "an essential component of development processes" (Sandu, 2000: 26), being a phenomenon caught in various aspects, in close correlation with the changes that have occurred in economic, social and quality of human life. are the main consequences of the migration process). According to the sociological dictionary, migration is defined as "a phenomenon that consists of the movement of people from one territorial area to another, followed by a change of residence and / or employment in a form of activity in the area of arrival" (Zamfir & Vlăsceanu, 1998: 350).

Therefore, from a sociological point of view, "migration" represents "a move in order to change the place of living and working, determined by social, political, economic or natural factors" (Feraru, 2008: 12). The change of domicile or place of work had, outside the community where a person lives, can be considered as migration in terms of the event, when we refer to several people, referring to the phenomenon of migration (Andreescu & Teodorescu, 2004: 2. 3).

Thus, the phenomenon of migration includes all socio-demographic events or cases of displacement of individuals (individually or within a group) outside their community of residence, in a certain period of time, involving a change of permanent residence and of the workplace (Otovescu, 2016: 27).

## **2. Forms of the manifestation of the migration phenomenon**

Situations in which economies find themselves, unfavourable situations that may occur at a given time (such as the economic recession of 2007-2010), political and social circumstances can lead to the exercise of psychological constraints on citizens, giving birth to their desire to find a better place to live, a place that meets their needs, which they perceive as important for a decent life. There are economic, social and political reasons behind the phenomenon of migration.

Financial reasons are the most common reasons for migration. The obvious and sometimes shocking differences between the salaries received in different countries, for the same types of services provided - a sufficient reason for an individual to migrate to a developed country (Eastern European countries are the countries where they earn the least, although the price level and consumer spending is similar to Western European societies).

Globally, against the background of the globalization process, which has led to many changes (Niță, 2014: 16), the world labour market has developed, jobs have increased (numerically), this phenomenon causing a whole causes that can be divided into two categories: the need to obtain labour from another country (for countries that are characterized by a labour shortage) and the need to emigrate to states that can lead to the fulfilment of ideals (for countries where the level of income from salaries is extremely low). Such objective reasons can be divided into endogenous and exogenous causes.

Endogenous objective reasons are composed of the internal existential situations of a country: economic reasons, social reasons, political reasons. The most common objective reason is the very low standard of living of individuals in their countries of origin, who choose to emigrate to countries that offer them financial security, both for themselves and their families. Exogenous objective reasons are based on the request from some states of qualified individuals in certain fields. For example, it is well known that in the last 10 years, Germany and France

have faced a sharp shortage of staff in the medical field, which for Romania has contributed to a significant increase in skilled foreign migration in this field (Goga & Ilie, 2017)

In Romania, the transition from a centralized economy to a market economy has led to a process of deindustrialization that has manifested itself for many Romanians through: declining wages, rising unemployment (produced mainly by the de-structuring of the industrial sector), and with these problems There have been several phenomena and social processes such as: massive poverty of the population, sharp decline in living standards, increased corruption and crime, etc. This situation, along with the abolition in 2002 of entry visas to EU countries, has contributed to a spread of the practice of temporary work abroad of Romanian citizens, temporary migration for work becoming one of the most important phenomena for the social transformations of Romania and for the lives of its citizens (Cojocaru, 2006: 33).

Being a member of the European Union since 2007, Romania still exports (15 years after joining the EU) through migration, labour. The costs of this form of migration are rising, and some are offset by the economic and social benefits of emigration. The advantages and disadvantages are different depending on the angle from which the emigration is analyzed. If we refer to the country of departure, regardless of the form in which the departure was made, the main disadvantage is related to the export of human capital; thus, labour is exported for the formation of which was invested - thus marking a loss of added value - future investments that could have returned to society, these being a way to grow the sustainable economy. If we refer to the country of destination, the consequences, for example, the consequences on the labour market, are more favourable: among them we can mention the reduction of the labour deficit, the attenuation of the demographic aging process, significant contributions to the increase of production. long-term means contributions to the development of the economy. From the point of view of the migrant, and of the family to which he belongs, the effects can be

both positive (earning higher wages than in the country of origin, improving the standard of living of the family, increasing the ability to save and investments), as well as negative (deterioration of family relationships, loss of ties with children, leaving in the care of other relatives, the occurrence of separation or divorce). These negative effects on the family will be described in the next paragraph, which will serve as a theoretical basis for the empirical research undertaken.

### **3. The main effects of external migration on the family**

The social system that undergoes multiple transformations due to going abroad is the family (Antman, 2013; Dafinoiu, Olaya & Essau, 2021). There are comparisons between temporary migration and permanent migration, between the departure of a single family member or the choice of both parents to leave with their children. It is an increasingly common phenomenon that can downgrade harmful effects on the state, due to the very large number of migrations. Families who have or have experienced migration abroad have often encountered problems such as divorce, declining birth rates, declining marriages, or marriages at a much older age. Moreover, we can say that there are cases in which migration has led to divorce. The phenomenon of migration has the effect of weakening relations between spouses, both as a result of the physical distance between them and as a result of the difficulties inherent in the migration process. Therefore, when the migration lasts for several years, the emigrant parent risks becoming depressed. On the other hand, the parent who remained in the country, who in turn faced difficulties in carrying out the tasks of the family that remained entirely as his responsibility, may consider that a more favourable solution is divorce and perhaps remarriage.

Regarding the departure of a single member abroad, it produces changes in family functions and roles. The one who stays in the country

holding the position of head of the family and fulfilling the tasks of the departed, this is not always done well enough. The departure of a family member abroad brings on the one hand satisfactory effects (clothing, food, good living conditions), on the other hand it seems that this departure also causes certain losses in terms of meeting emotional needs, the most affected being children (Lu, 2014: 1082). The most difficult situation is when both parents go to work abroad, the children being forced to stay at home in the care of people who, no matter how hard they try, cannot provide the care and love that the child expects from the parents (Vanore, Mazzucato & Siegel, 2015).

One of the biggest consequences of parents' migration to work abroad is that many children in Romania end up growing up without the support of their own parents. The departure of one or both parents cause a lot of difficulties in terms of the evolution of the children's personality. This phenomenon is due to the great financial shortages that individuals are facing more and more. Going to work abroad may seem, for the moment, a saving decision, but with the maintenance and evolution of this phenomenon will have major consequences at the individual and family level. The effects of parental migration on children fall into two broad categories: negative effects and positive effects.

Regarding the positive effects, they are extremely low, being related, first, to financial aspects (Carillo, Quintieri, & Vinci, 1999: 587-589). By leaving the parents to work abroad, the basic needs of the child remain more or less unmet, being replaced by sums of money that they send to the country, but in such a difficult time for the child not all things can be replaced money, especially the love and attention of parents. Therefore, the positive effects of the parents' departure are largely based on the well-being of the children and the increase in the standard of living. The lack of love and attention with which children grow up is replaced by material goods, but very often money does not satisfy all needs, this situation turning children into isolated people, unable to build social relationships or attach to someone.

The negative effects that going abroad to work produces on children:

a) *The appearance and development of the phenomenon of child abuse*<sup>5</sup> (physical abuse; emotional abuse (psychological); sexual abuse; economic abuse; societal abuse; institutional abuse). In the long run, abuse can lead to changes in the child's personality development, with serious effects over time, encountered in an adult who has great difficulty adapting and social integration such as: aggressive behaviour, suicidal tendencies, drug use or alcohol, isolation, self-doubt (Zheng, 2016).

b) *Child neglect*. With the departure of their parents to work abroad, children are subjected to neglect and various forms of exploitation, such as the phenomenon of child abuse (Valtolina, & Colombo, 2012: 905-906). There are cases in which the person in whose care the child is left does not live up to the child's expectations due to the inability to satisfy his wishes and needs. Thus, it can be seen that the departure of parents abroad violates certain rights of children left alone at home such as: the right of the child to grow up with his parents, the right to education, the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to health, the right of the child to rest and vacation and protection against labour exploitation, the right to special protection and assistance from the state.

c) *Psychological effects*. The psycho-emotional development of children is extremely affected due to the parents' departure to work abroad. Children who face such problems are part of a vulnerable group, and among the negative effects are: pain, shyness, fear, depression, anxiety (Bulai, 2006: 57). In the case of children older than 10 years, there are effects such as: drug or alcohol use and inappropriate behaviour. Children whose parents go to work abroad often face psychological

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<sup>5</sup> Child abuse means any voluntary action of a person who is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or authority towards him, which endangers the life, physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development, bodily integrity, the physical or mental health of the child - Art. 89, par. 1 of Law 272/2004 on the protection and promotion of children's rights.

depression, and their psycho-behavioural manifestations are: sadness, delinquent behaviour, suicidal thoughts, attention disorders, depression, and feelings of abandonment. (Robila, 2011: 330-332). The absence of one or both parents subject the child to problems he or she is facing because of his or her unmet needs. The child's need for love from the parents diminishes with the passage of time, changing with the child's need to communicate with the parents. Most of the time, they are left in the care of relatives, most of the time in the care of grandparents (Vanore, Mazzucato & Siegel, 2015: 254). The age difference between them makes the child perceive the stress (Breaz, 2020a), to isolate himself from the other people with whom he has no one to communicate about the important events in his life, causing pain felt by the child and conflicts between them due to too much expectations. that the child has from the grandparents, to which they cannot rise.

d) Social effects. The separation of children from their parents, the lack of attention and love they feel, as well as the negligence on the part of the people who should make up for the lack of parents, lead to deviant behaviours (Rădulescu & Piticaui, 1989: 11) for children left alone. Unfortunately, these parents become aware of the risks of their actions only when the actions of their children arouse feelings of parental responsibility. One of the phenomena that can occur is school deviance, which can be defined as "the set of behaviours that violate or transgress school norms and values" (Neamtu, 2000: 26). The main forms of school deviance are: running away from school, dropping out of school, truancy or school violence. Finally, an extremely negative effect can be emotional hearing (Breaz, 20020b); then, we must mention the bullying, the children who have parents who have gone abroad, being able to be both victims and aggressors. All this translates into poor learning outcomes, which, in the long run, can contribute to the deterioration of the importance of school in their lives.

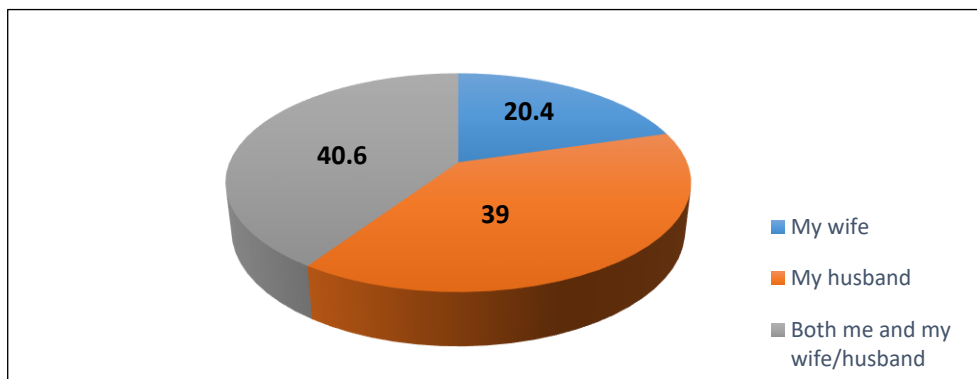
#### **4. Method**

The quantitative research whose results will be presented, selectively, in the paragraphs below was carried out through the technique of opinion poll, using a questionnaire that we applied to an exploratory group of 217 adults, parents who were or are going to work abroad in the last 5 years. The questionnaire was self-administered and included 20 questions that were strictly related to the purpose and objectives of the research. The aim of the research was to identify the causes that led to this decision and to identify the effects that parental migration has on the children left in the country. Among the objectives of this research were: identifying the most important causes that lead to the decision to go to work abroad; identifying the consequences that the parents' departure to work abroad has on the children, in social, psychological, material, school plan by analysing the answers offered by the parents who have been or are going to work abroad; identifying the impact that migration has on the family in the country of origin. The respondents were people who had a residential environment both in urban areas (64.3%) and in rural areas (35.7%). The group was gender-balanced, the participants being 58.2% women and 41.8% men. The first hypothesis was that in families where both parents are abroad, the psychological effects felt by the child / children are much wider than those felt in families where one of the parents remained in the country. A second hypothesis was this: the less often parents return to the country, the poorer their children's school results are.

#### **5. Results**

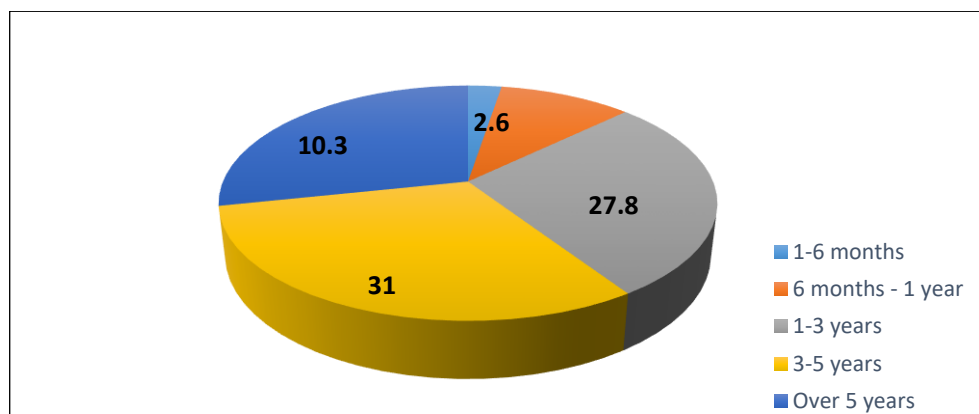
From the total of our sample, it can be observed that in most families both parents were gone (40.6% of respondents indicated this fact) outside the borders of the country. This is extremely important when analyzing the various social and psychological problems that children in these families are facing, because most of the time, the strongest effects (especially the

feeling of abandonment) are felt. to those children who have both parents gone abroad. In addition, the risk of dropping out of school is much higher among children who have stayed in the country with relatives other than their parents. In second place, in the order of answers (with a share of 39%), are those families in which the husband was or has gone to work abroad. Of course, the lack of a father figure cannot have such negative consequences as the lack of a mother figure, but it feels quite strong, especially in the case of teenage boys. A share of 20.4% of the respondents indicated that their mother was or is away in their family; the lack of a mother figure strongly contributes to the appearance of the feeling of abandonment, anxiety, and behavioural disorders, especially when the children left in the country are very young.



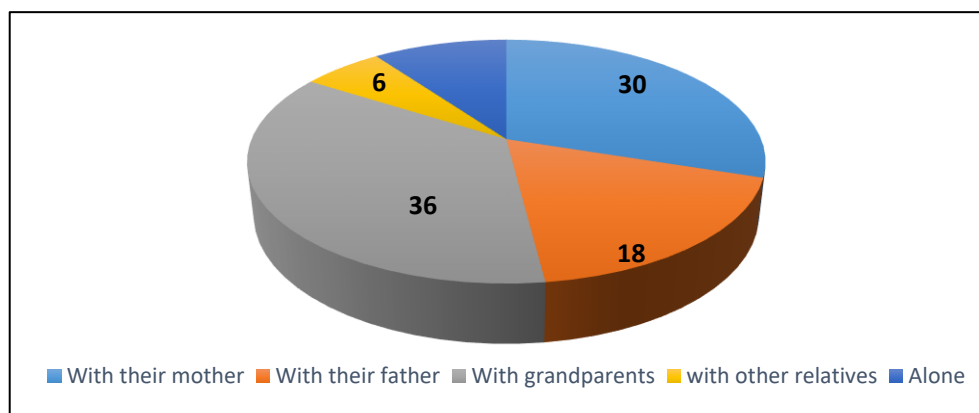
**Figure 1.** Which one from your family was or is still abroad for work? (n= 217)

The question below highlights the amount of time children are required to spend without one or both parents. The highest percentage is the category of parents who left 3-5 years old 31.0%, the next category being designated by parents who left over 5 years old 27.8%. He prefers to leave for a longer period, as short departures do not have major benefits and do not help families economically in the long run. The third category of parents represents those who have left 1-3 years in a percentage of 27.8%, followed by those who leave for a period of 6 months - one year 10.3%, and the last position is places those who left for 1-6 months with a percentage of 2.6%.



**Figure 2.** From how long have you left Romania, to work abroad? (n= 217)

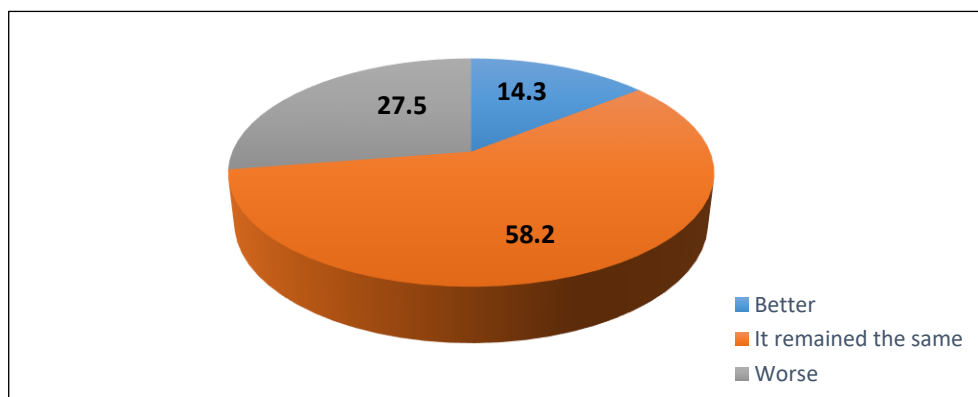
Long-term migration is the one that raises the most issues in terms of effects on children. When this is corroborated by the intention not to return to the country, it becomes a social issue that needs to be put on the agenda of public policies aimed at returning migrants to their countries of origin.



**Figure 3.** Who are your children currently living with? (n= 217)

Following the 50.0% percentage representing both parents who left (resulting in the first question of the questionnaire) when asked who the children currently live with, they answered 36.0% that they had left their children in grandparents' care. Also in correlation with the answer to the first question, as a result of which 30.0% of the departed parents

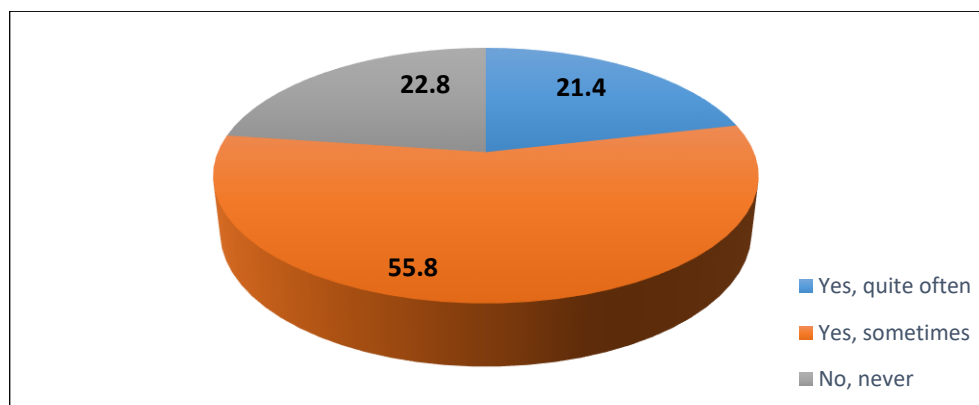
are spouses / fathers, regarding this question I received the answer according to which the children live with the mothers currently in relation to 30.0%, the next percentage 18, 0% is represented by the fact that currently children live with fathers, following the departure of mothers to work abroad, and those who occupy the last position are those left with other people after the departure of both parents 6.0%.



**Figure 4.** What is the school situation (results) of your child after your departure abroad? (n= 217)

When looking at the correlation between parental migration and school results (Figure 4), the most common response was that the child's school situation remained the same after the parents left abroad, compared to the period when the parents were in the country - 58,2%. This answer is a favourable one, but it could also raise some questions, because we can say that they end up being satisfied with similar results without having any motivation to learn more, to improve, or to evolve. Another percentage, 14.3%, of parents consider that their children's school situation is a better one.

It is also serious that the percentage of parents who claimed that their children's school situation after leaving abroad has worsened, due to the lack of supervision of the child by an adult in terms of homework and not only, or due to various jobs. perform them instead of parents (such as housework), which is a significant percentage of 27.5%.



**Figure 5.** Does your child blame you for leaving to work abroad? (n= 217)

Regarding the reproach (blame) brought by the children against their parents following this decision, the parents replied that they are sometimes reproached for having left them (55.8%), they are reproached quite often, a response supported by 22, 8% of parents, and 21.4% of them said they were not blamed. The verbalization of the reproach, beyond the fact that it represents the awareness of the feeling of abandonment, can also represent an important step in solving any problem that may arise against the background of the parents leaving for work abroad. The fact that there are parents who have indicated that they have never received this reproach from their children may mean several things: that children do not feel abandoned, but also that there is no effective communication within the family, so if there is a problem, it is not communicated.

**Table 1:** Have you noticed any behavioural changes of the child / children after going abroad?

		%
1.	Yes	56,8
2.	No	43,2

**Table 2:** If yes, what are they?

		%
1.	Aggressivity	17,9
2.	Anxiety	28,6
3.	Isolation	53,5

The answers to this question were quite similar, but most parents stated that they noticed 56.8% of their children's behavioural changes, and 43.2% did not notice such changes. However, the affirmative answer being the one that prevails, being asked to mention the noticed changes, the parents answered in a percentage of 53.5% that they saw their children how they isolate themselves from the rest of the world, but also from their own parents, the relationship between them and parents becoming more and more distant, another noticeable change was anxiety 28.0%, and aggression among children was noticed by 17.0% of parents.

## **6. Conclusions**

This article, through the results of the research (presented in a synthetic manner), highlighted the effects of parents' departure abroad on their children and the feelings they have, which often remain unheard and unseen. Being overwhelmed by the multitude of problems they face in their daily lives due to poverty, lack of jobs, precarious financial situations, parents often forget the needs of their children, being concerned only to meet the material needs by putting in second place the affective ones. During the developmental period, children need both the maternal and the paternal figure to benefit from a harmonious growth, because no matter in whose care the child remains, the support and love of the parents are irreplaceable. The departure of a family member to work abroad creates an imbalance in the exercise of roles within the group, the solution of these problems being the redistribution of specific tasks. In addition to bringing a plus in meeting basic needs (food, clothing, better living conditions, etc.) there is the possibility of a loss in meeting emotional needs, and in this case, the most affected family members are children.

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# Agile teams and well-being sustainability issue

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**Abstract:** Agile working is defined as a mode of working in which an organization encourages its employees to work where, when, and how they want – with maximum freedom and lowest limitations – to optimize their performance and accomplish their finest performances. It can entail a person working at various workstations in various offices, from home some or all of the time, in co-working spaces with other organizations, or even from a coffee shop. It can also lead to a shift in attention away from working hours or face-time in the workplace and toward outcomes. Not only does this carry with it the problems and possibilities that new technology and expanding globalization offer, but an increasing proportion of people demand to work more flexibly as well. The present paper represents a theoretical narrative review on the topic of the effect of agile work on teams' well-being. After recent research results are presented, the current paper sets up research perspectives on further illustrating the effect of agile work on employee's wellbeing in the long-term. We live in fast changing times, and this includes the way we work. As a result, some existing health concerns may vanish, while new ones, such as those linked with working from home, may develop. Flexibility in the way we work is definitely on the rise. Employers must consider future risks, predict their impact, and aim to adopt ways to limit or eliminate them, while insurers must guarantee proper safety mechanisms are in place when granting coverage.

**Keywords:** *agile work, agile team, sustainable well-being.*

## 1. Introduction

According to a recent national poll, a raising percentage of services industry employees are facing burnout (Rad & Rad, 2021). Unfair remuneration, an onerous workload, and excessive overtime labor are identified as the primary causes of burnout. The elevated workload might be linked to agile processes, especially when organizations embrace agile with limited adaptation for the company (Rad & Rad, 2021; Rad & Rad, 2021; Rad, 2021; Rad & Rad, 2021). So, how exactly is agile practice harming the mental health of employees?

Agile working is defined by Salah, Paige, and Cairns, (2014) as a mode of working in which an organization encourages its employees to work where, when, and how they want – with maximum freedom and lowest limitations – to optimize their performance and accomplish their finest performances.

It can entail a person working at various workstations in various offices, from home some or all of the time, in co-working spaces with other organizations, or even from a coffee shop. It can also lead to a shift in attention away from working hours or face-time in the workplace and toward outcomes. Not only does this carry with it the problems and possibilities that new technology and expanding globalization offer, but an increasing proportion of people demand to work more flexibly as well (Breaz, 2019; Breaz, 2020).

The advantages are obvious for both companies and employees. Aside from the obvious business benefits of lower office costs and environmental benefits, research shows that agile working improves morale and stress levels, increases staff retention, and, most importantly, broadens and unlocks a larger talent pool from which a company can recruit talent regardless of where they live.

Agile working necessitates a whole new mindset, and poor and unstructured management and communication procedures will surely result in a breakdown in trust among team members, significantly

harming engagement. Working efficiently necessitates the employer's complete commitment and support, including investment in technology and the establishment of strong policies and processes. Furthermore, while workers who work agilely may feel inspired and empowered, the hazards connected with agile work are a relatively new notion for employers who must plan for the emergence of new health issues

While agile working has been heralded as the solution to work-life balance, as organizations begin to implement the transformation, several problems are emerging. This includes the claim that home working might cause stress for certain people because the blurring of barriers between home and work leads to a 'always on' culture with work intruding on precious family time. Furthermore, working remotely from your coworkers can lead to feelings of isolation and a lack of belonging if there aren't enough opportunities to successfully communicate, since face-to-face communication is frequently abandoned in favor of emails, instant chatting, and the predominance of workplace applications.

Could there be a rise in occupational stress claims in the future if employees are not given the chance to collaborate and integrate? If technology or office design removes the incentive for employees to speak or interact, modern modes of working may become alienating. Loneliness may be an expensive component of workplace wellness since lonely individuals are less involved with their job and are more likely to need sick days, not to mention that if the employer is responsible for fostering this atmosphere, the organization may be subject to claims.

To minimize or mitigate future dangers, new methods of monitoring employee well-being will need to be explored. Indeed, as a result of such worries, we are already seeing organizations establish technology free zones, and some companies have regulations prohibiting employees from sending emails after certain hours.

Sedentary lifestyles, according to research, cause or contribute to health problems such as heart disease, poor mental health, type 2 diabetes, and malignancies. Office employment is a sedentary profession, yet office workers are visible to their employers on a regular basis in a

manner that home workers are not, and how much responsibility does an employer have for monitoring and controlling this? If they are, workers may be compelled to utilize smart devices to monitor their activity levels throughout working hours in order to evaluate what modifications may need to be made. Despite the fact that this poses further ethical concerns, not to mention the impact on privacy concerns. For the time being, an employer's responsibilities do not extend to what happens in a person's home, but in this changing environment, this might change.

We will further present main research focused on agile teams and distinct effect of well-being with the purpose of analyzing and classifying main research trends as well as to establish further methodological suggestions into deeper analyzing the complex psychological factors that influence the well-being of agile teams.

## **2. Research on agile teams and distinct effect of well-being**

In Charalampous' research (2020), well-being is explored in terms of five major dimensions pertaining to (i) emotional, (ii) cognitive, (iii) social, (iv) professional, and (v) psychosomatic experiences in an agile working situation. The study looks at the five components of well-being in relation to the existing literature on agile working practices, namely 'always on' remote work (Charalampous, 2020). The positive impact of agile working on employee satisfaction, devotion, and pleasant feelings is acknowledged, as are its potential drawbacks, such as social and professional isolation, and perceived hazards to professional advancement. There are various faults in studies concerning cognitive, professional, and psychosomatic aspects. Following that, the consequences for practice are discussed, and appropriate treatments and approaches are suggested (Charalampous, 2020).

Agho, Price, and Mueller (1992) offer empirical research that tackles the issue of well-being among software development team members. The question is whether an agile approach has any discernible impact on the well-being of software engineers. Participant observation,

focus group interviews, close-ended surveys, and simple statistical tests such as Spearman Correlation and Mann–Whitney test were used, as well as quantitative and qualitative methodologies. According to preliminary findings, an agile methodology (XP) has a beneficial influence on the degree of excitement of software engineers in the most active project. To understand why XP can boost excitement, the findings are evaluated in light of the cognitive, emotional, and management qualities of the activities investigated.

The study by Laanti (2013) is based on a company-wide survey of 466 software engineering practitioners. The author inquired about their subjective feelings regarding stress, empowerment, and performance in their various engineering teams following the implementation of agile methodology. The findings show that feelings of greater performance improvement and sustained pace are associated, and that this difference is statistically significant. Respondents who believe their team is empowered report reduced stress. However, there was no significant difference in perceptions of stress and empowerment between respondents working in Kanban and Scrum mode following the agile switch. The group that improved its performance as a result of agile also reported a better workload balance. The group that performed poorly as a result of agile approaches was also more stressed. The variations might be explained by the management techniques used in the teams. The findings are significant because they validate in an industrial environment what several agile books suggest: lowering workload and empowering teams has an influence on performance and stress.

We now live in a digital age, when jobs are increasingly organized around the use of information and communication technology (ICT) (Russell, Grant, 2020). As a result, the concept of agile working has emerged, in which employees are emancipated from traditional forms of labor and are structured around four basic duties. They include enhancing temporal and spatial flexibility, integrating resources,

partaking in innovative activity, and leveraging communication and digital technology to adjust dynamically to service and market demands and fulfill both individual and corporate goals. The authors discuss the four agile working activities and how they influence people's performance and well-being in agile working, as well as how these issues should be addressed (Russell, Grant, 2020).

Another research assesses the amount to which the agile methodology can impact anxiety, happiness, melancholy, and enthusiasm levels within software engineering (SE) teams (Mazni, Abdullah, Lailee, 2015). The authors' goal is to study empirically the impact of agile approaches on the work-related well-being of software development teams (Mazni, Abdullah, Lailee, 2015). To achieve this goal, a comparison study was done in an academic setting. The effect was explored quantitatively by statistical analysis. According to the research, agile does not appear to have a significant influence on work-related satisfaction. Nonetheless, the team that was able to adhere to agile methodologies as closely as possible during the software project was more excited. This study contributes to the corpus of knowledge in software engineering research and practice by concentrating on human aspects (Mazni, Abdullah, Lailee, 2015).

Another study attempts to characterize the present condition by contrasting high and low perceived agile work and assessing the level of mental effort using physiological indicators (Tuomivaara, Lindholm, Käsälä, 2017). The authors conducted a baseline poll to determine how agile work was perceived in the team, and then took physiological measurements three times throughout the course of a working day. The effects were investigated using a repeated-measures design. The findings demonstrate that agile work, such keeping a constant pace, may level out workload during the course of a working day. The results of the low agile work were consistent with the anticipation that work would build up at the end of the time owing to shoddy planning and infrequent inspection.

As a result, deadline pressure increased the strain on employees (Tuomivaara, Lindholm, Käsälä, 2017).

According to another research, at this moment in time, there is a chance to impact workplace redesign, development, and implementation, as well as report on the consequences of what occurs inside the workplace and its dynamic face (Laughton, Thatcher, 2018). As the nature of labor has changed, so have the places where it is done. The present trend of designing and managing energy-efficient green buildings is part of the cause for this transformation. Green buildings are supposed to increase the health, productivity, and comfort of its residents since green building regulations mandate improvements to areas of interior environment quality. The current research was conducted as part of a preliminary inquiry at a big South African corporation prior to their relocation to a new green building. This study investigates the influence of various office layouts, such as agile workspaces, on employee comfort, health, and happiness (Laughton, Thatcher, 2018).

Another study found that anxiety disorders and well-being were the most commonly observed mental health and well-being categories, whereas conduct disorder and bipolar disorders were the least frequently noticed. The use of gamification to promote mental health and well-being was recognized in 59 percent (41/70) of the publications and was approximately divided into two themes: (1) raising participation and (2) improving the targeted effects of an intervention (Cheng, Davenport, Johnson, Vella, Hickie, 2019). According to the findings, the present use of gamification to apps and technology for enhancing mental health and well-being does not mesh with the trend of positive reinforcement condemned in the wider health and well-being literature (Cheng, Davenport, Johnson, Vella, Hickie, 2019). The authors also identified considerable overlap between the most extensively used gamification methodologies and contemporary behavior modification frameworks. The data also suggest that health behavior change theory is not driving gamification adoption, and that many academics may treat gamification as a black box, neglecting its underlying mechanisms. We push for more

specific and explicit definitions of how gamification is employed, as well as the standardization of applied game terminology within and across disciplines (Cheng, Davenport, Johnson, Vella, Hickie, 2019).

Many modern employment feature long periods of continuous sitting and less opportunities for physical exercise, despite the fact that inadequate physical activity is a severe threat to both individual and organizational health (Thompson, 2020). The authors investigate the challenges and opportunities that agile employees have when it comes to maintaining healthy levels of physical activity during the workday. The difficulties that firms have in motivating their agile employees to engage in physical activity are also mentioned. Technology may be both a contributor and a solution to a problem (Thompson, 2020).

According to the Socio-Technical Design (STS) work design principles, self-organization is a signature of agile software development (SD) teams and a precursor of motivation and creativity at work (Kakar, 2017). While self-organization is viewed as a vital success component in agile SD, past research has demonstrated that it is challenging. However, no study on the actual level of self-organization employed in agile teams has been conducted. While the quantity of self-organization varies throughout agile projects, the authors found that the level of self-organization in agile teams was significantly higher on each of the nine criteria than those using plan-driven methodologies. Self-organization has also been found to improve the motivation and inventiveness of SD teams (Kakar, 2017).

Agile working means breaking away from traditional working methods, enabling physical and temporal barriers between work and home to collapse. Researchers investigated how border management preferences for integration or segmentation, as well as the match between these preferences and agile working styles, may influence work-life experiences, attitudes, and well-being (Basile, Beauregard, 2020). The challenges that agile working poses for boundary management, particularly in the context of an increasingly “always on” work culture, are discussed, along with suggestions for what businesses

can do to assist workers in managing their work-life balance in order to achieve adequate levels of performance and well-being in each life area (Basile, Beauregard, 2020).

Stress is a major workplace issue that has an impact on both individual and organizational health. Early supporters of Agile Software Development argued that by stressing a sustainable pace and self-organizing teams, it may help alleviate stress. However, the authors' examination of a 2014 poll found that stress is still frequent in Agile teams, particularly among those with less knowledge. The authors also noticed that newcomers to Agile emphasized technical rather than collaborative practices, which they suspected may explain the stress (Meier, et al., 2018).

In order to increase agile teams' cooperativeness and performance, minimize conflicts, and make more accurate judgements, a new position paper suggests a technique for assessing positive and negative emotional contagion across agile teams for the creation of mission critical systems (Alhubaishy, & Benedicenti, 2017). Human mistakes in the analyzing, designing, implementing, and testing phases cause major losses and hazards in mission critical systems; nevertheless, the use of agile development approaches in mission critical systems has shown encouraging outcomes in terms of decreasing risks and costs. Human error, on the other hand, is the key contributor to the system's success or failure in agile procedures. For decades, research in the software business has concentrated on developers' cognition and conation in order to increase their performance and team communication, but the importance of affect (emotions and moods) has been disregarded. Emotional contagion has only been tested as an affect influence factor in studies at the managerial decision-making level; however, there is no evidence of such studies that investigate whether or not emotional contagion influences behavioral groups in agile development, which is the primary concern of this paper (Alhubaishy, & Benedicenti, 2017).

Occupant density is an important and fundamental parameter of space use efficiency. It has an impact on the user's privacy, crowding, and satisfaction (Keeling, Clements-Croome, Roesch, 2015). The impact of

agile working has been dual. In addition to allocated desks and formal conference rooms, workplaces are increasingly offering a variety of workspace settings such as break out space, collaborative space, and meditative space. Second, office employees have grown more mobile since they are able to work from a wider range of places both within and outside of their primary workplace. This study investigates whether workers in agile workplaces and those with greater mobility have different experiences with privacy than those in more traditional offices and work routines. Privacy may be defined as a retreat from others, control over information flow, and control over interactions. When compared to open plan offices, our findings suggest that agile workspaces enhance information control. It was also shown that highly mobile employees are more vulnerable to the negative impacts of human interaction. A taxonomy of offices is established based on the elements that contribute to the feeling of privacy (Keeling, Clements-Croome, Roesch, 2015).

Agile work approaches are becoming increasingly prevalent. Although they show considerable potential in terms of workplace well-being, comprehensive scientific study on this topic is limited (Tuomivaara, Lindholm, & Käsälä, 2017; Russell, Grant, 2020). This article seeks to describe the current situation by assessing the condition of mental effort using physiological markers and comparing felt agile work at high and low levels. Is the agile manner of working connected with job satisfaction? In the various stages of implementing agile approaches, three software teams and four embedded development teams were deployed. Authors conducted a baseline survey on perceived agile work in the team and three physiological assessments during the course of a working period. The effects were examined using a repeated-measure approach. The findings show that agile work may level out workload within a working time, maintain a sustainable pace. The outcomes of the low agile work were consistent with the anticipation that work would pile at the conclusion of the period due to sloppy planning and a lack of frequent monitoring. As a result, workers felt higher strain

as a result of the deadline pressure (Tuomivaara, Lindholm, & Käsälä, 2017).

Grant (2020) investigates how ‘agile’ working styles arose by encouraging flexibility, integrating resources, participating in innovative activities, and utilizing new technologies (Grant, 2020). The necessity for organizations to respond to and deliver change in rapidly changing work environments and marketplaces in order to fulfill consumer, organizational, market, and worker requirements is discussed. Furthermore, measuring agile work is uncommon, and there are few validated scales that capture or ‘quantify’ agile work and how it satisfies the goals of organizations. The recent creation of the E-Work Life Scale and its sister measure, the E-Work Well-being Scale, give fresh and important insights into how to quantify essential agile working practices relevant to remote e-workers as a “kind” of agile worker.

Virtual teams are a dominating kind of agile work, on the one hand providing unequalled benefits while, on the other hand, posing obstacles for leaders and members in terms of effective project completion. Chamakiotis (2020) explores how to effectively manage virtual teams, building on existing research, with an emphasis on ensuring that workers’ well-being is not compromised in the sake of project success.

In today’s dynamic workplace, a rising percentage of employees spend some of their working hours away from a primary office or site. Due to less opportunities for face-to-face interaction and potential challenges with access to health and well-being-related services, leading the well-being and health of these workers can be difficult. Another recent research (Nayani, 2020) focuses on a study that finds leadership concepts applicable to the dispersed work setting, as well as management tools that can improve worker well-being results when used. The findings have influenced the development of practical guidelines for line managers and occupational health and well-being practitioners to adopt in order to enhance outcomes for scattered workers.

Another research investigates the benefits and limitations of agile and remote working in EDF Energy, a UK energy corporation (Stone,

Horan, & Flaxman, 2018). The results of 741 replies to an online survey highlighted the advantages experienced by this workforce, such as higher job engagement, as well as the consequent organizational outcomes, such as increased organizational commitment. Related difficulties were also documented, such as the degrees of job isolation and loneliness faced by various demographic groups. Particularly noteworthy is the group that spends 80–100% of their time working remotely, which reported considerably greater emotions of loneliness and occupational isolation despite having the lowest desire to quit. Insights on overcoming obstacles and making innovative methods of working work' were also obtained.

A recent systematic literature review sought to achieve the following goals: (Charalampous, Grant, Tramontano, & Michailidis, 2019). aims to obtain a better understanding of the relationship between distant e-working and the five domains of work well-being: emotional, cognitive, social, professional, and psychosomatic. The study included 63 papers that used quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method approaches. The findings suggest that we know more about remote e-workers' emotional states, social and professional lives, and cognitive functioning and psychosomatic conditions than we do about their cognitive functioning and psychosomatic conditions. While the evidence reveals a positive emphasis, this review highlights some negative features of this mode of working, such as social and professional isolation, and perceived dangers to professional growth.

In today's culture, agile working entails leveraging technology to work flexibly across multiple places, time zones, and so on. Employees frequently have digital alerts turned on in order to adapt to an agile working environment, but we know little about the possible impact this has on employee well-being and capacity to operate well at work. A recent study (Uther, Cleveland, Jones, 2020) looks at the function of physiological reactions (as an indicator of hypervigilance) to digital message alerts and if these indices are connected with perceptions of poor work-life balance. We show that message alerts cause heightened attentional switching in the brain, whereas neural assessments of individuals' perceived balance between work and non-work roles imply

a potentially vicious cycle of weariness and hypervigilance that comes with poor work-life balance. Thus, the authors investigated these data and reached a conclusion on how to break the loop of physiological hypervigilance caused by a lack of work-life balance (Uther, Cleveland, Jones, 2020).

Another research, Zeike, Choi, Lindert, and Pfaff (2019), focused on two cognitive work demands in managers connected to change due to digital transformation: perceived choice overload and digitalization pressure. We anticipated that the level of difficult cognitive demands at work is increasing and has a detrimental impact on managers' psychological well-being. Potential prognostic impacts on well-being were evaluated using multivariate regression analysis. Lower well-being was shown to be strongly linked with increased choice overload, but not with felt pressure from digitalization. Given the field's current state of flux, it is critical to strive to better understand when choice overload and digitalization pressure arise, and when these may result in detrimental health implications (Zeike, Choi, Lindert, & Pfaff, 2019).

Prior to COVID-19, telework was a crucial step taken by businesses to promote employee well-being, but the proof of its effectiveness was ambiguous. A recent paper (Miglioretti, et al., 2021) aimed to develop and validate a questionnaire measuring the quality of telework and to assess the impact of telework on employee work engagement and work-family balance in the cases of high-quality telework, low-quality telework, and no telework. The final quality of telework was composed of three categories based on principal component analysis and Cronbach's alpha values: 1) agile workplaces, 2) flexible workers, and 3) virtual leadership. ANOVAs revealed that among high-quality telework, job resources, work engagement, and work-family balance are substantially greater, but job demands do not vary or are lower. The Job Demands-Resources model proved effective in explaining the consequences of telework (Miglioretti, et al., 2021).

Following a socio-technical systems approach, the purpose of this study is to investigate the role of organizational social support and

specific support for teleworkers in influencing teleworker wellbeing, the mediating role of social isolation, which may result from a person-environment mismatch in these relationships, and possible differences in these relationships between low-intensity and hybrid teleworkers (Bentley, et al., 2016). An online poll of teleworking employees was used to collect teleworkers' opinions of support and telework outcomes (psychological strain, job satisfaction, and social isolation). Organizational social support and teleworker assistance were linked to higher job satisfaction and lower psychological strain. Social isolation moderated the association between organizational social support and the two outcome variables, and structural relationships differed for hybrid and low-intensity teleworker sub-samples. These findings imply that providing the essential organizational and teleworker support is critical for improving teleworker-environment fit and, as a result, ensuring good telework outcomes (Bentley, et al., 2016).

### **3. Conclusions**

In recent years, individuals concerned with the creation of a meaningful and sustainable society have grown more unsatisfied with merely financial measurements of success. That trend has been reflected in the workplace, where corporate executives are looking for a purpose for their organizations beyond maximising return on capital, and are realizing that obtaining such a position in itself helps to generate commercial success. Many people, including the investment community, increasingly see human capital management as an indicator of a company's long-term prospects—the well-being of an organization and the well-being of its employees are intimately intertwined (Dewe, Cooper, 2012). There is a growing corpus of data demonstrating which activities impact workplace wellness, for better or worse, but numerous gaps remain. As the twenty-first century advances, it is probable that workplace wellness will continue to rise to the top of the business agenda, with employers playing an increasingly crucial role in deciding the health of the human condition.

We live in rapidly changing times, and the way we work is no exception. As a consequence, some current health issues may disappear, while others, such as those associated with working from home, may emerge. Workplace flexibility is clearly on the increase. Employers must plan for future hazards, estimate their impact, and try to reduce or eliminate them, while insurers must ensure sufficient safety systems are in place before giving coverage.

It is becoming increasingly clear that employees' mental health is a critical predictor of their overall health, and that poor mental health and workplace pressures can contribute to a variety of physical disorders such as hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular problems, among others. Furthermore, poor mental health can lead to employee burnout, limiting their capacity to contribute effectively in both their personal and professional life. Thus, an individual's chosen job path, objectives, aspirations, social life, and professional demands strongly impact their quality of life, but the means to do what they like is heavily determined by where they go to work each day. Work and happiness, on the other hand, are rarely considered as suitable mates, and studies have revealed that workplaces may be leading individuals to age beyond their years. The challenge for businesses is to design workplaces that are readily integrated into people's lives, accommodating family and home life as well as entertainment and fitness activities. Employers are responsible for eradicating everything that may block the link between work and happiness (Walsh, 2015). This entails creating an environment in which individuals are not just satisfied with their roles, but also with their bodies and minds and the community around them.

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# Multimedia teaching learning strategies as a tool in training aptitude for schooling

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**Abstract:** The use of multimedia tools in education, has had an impact on various areas of the teaching learning process. Recent advancements in the role of preschool education in the development of children include the use of Information and Communication Technologies, particularly the support of multimedia tools. Multimedia is recognized as any tool that can foster knowledge and experiences for this critical age, and the support of specific areas from an educational standpoint is considered significant. In this paper, we present a brief study that focuses on kindergarten aptitudes for schooling that are supported by multimedia educational tools. In the first part of the article, we present some theoretical ideas on the concept, and then in the second part we share the results of a brief research on the way multimedia strategies and tools can affect the development of aptitudes of preschoolers from Arad County.

**Key words:** *multimedia, strategies, tools, preschool, schooling, aptitudes.*

## Introduction

Romanian educational literature resumed reanalysis and redefining teaching methodology in response to the need to broaden concern for

training and self-development technologies, as well as to improve the relationship with teaching methodology, virtual media, and interactive forms of group organization. We consider those educational means that exploit multimedia elements by their information contribution to have the greatest pedagogical potential of all educational means, as a teaching component of the teaching strategy. (Tudor, 2012) The traditional approach to preschool education teaching restricts kids to reading texts, listening to lectures, and discussing ideas in seminars. However, when information is presented in a variety of ways, they learn better and are more interested in learning tasks. (Dughi & Roman, 2008)

### **Theoretical foundation**

There are numerous formats for multimedia. It could be anything you hear or see. Images, music, sound, videos, records, films, animations, and other media are examples. Web pages frequently contain multimedia elements of various types and formats. Media files contain multimedia elements (such as audio or video). The use of a computer to present and combine text, graphics, audio, and video with links and tools that allow the user to navigate, interact, create, and communicate is known as multimedia. This definition, includes four components that are essential to multimedia. First, a computer must be present to coordinate what you see and hear and to interact with you. Second, the information must be linked together. Third, there must be tools for navigating the web of interconnected information.

Multimedia is redefining the communication system, which is an important part of our society's infrastructure. A record number of mergers between companies jockeying for position in this fast-paced field are combining the telephone, television, and personal computer into a mass market multimedia utility. (Brut, 2006)

Multimedia is a type of content and media that combines various types of content, such as encoded visual data, audio, text, language formats, and more. The term can be used as a noun (to describe an

Multimedia teaching learning strategies as a tool in training aptitude for schooling environment with multiple forms of content) or as an adjective (to describe an environment with multiple forms of content). The term is used in contrast to traditional forms of hand-made or printed media, which use only rudimentary computer screens, such as text-only ones. Text, audio, image, animation, video, or interactive content are all examples of multimedia. They are in electronic form and can be viewed on a computer, tablet, smartphone, e-reader, or other device. (Bucur, 2020)

Multimedia is typically recorded and played, displayed, or accessed via information processing devices such as electronic or computerized devices over the Internet, but it can also be part of a live show. The electronic media devices used to store and experiment with multimedia content are also referred to as multimedia (as an adjective). Multimedia differs from mixed media in the fine arts in that it includes audio, for example, and has a broader scope. The terms 'rich media' and 'interactive media' are synonymous, and 'hypermedia' is a distinct multimedia application.

### **Recent perspectives in education**

Skills are developed by practicing under the influence of educational action, they also underlie the identification of talents and the formation of exceptional skills. (Bocoş, 2017) Skills begin to develop with the preschool period, when the learner is presented with a series of activities that deepen his artistic side. Examples of activities with which his skills are developed are: drawing, painting, modeling, dancing, music, theater, movies, online exercises, virtual games, and so on. (Anghelache, 2017) The activities of the preschool child must be diversified and motivating, the educator having an important role in their selection because, through them, it can observe and discover the innate inclinations of the learners. (Kelemen, 2018) These activities are prerequisites for the first authentic career guidance experiences. The educator has a significant role in this

period because she observes best the skills that are developed in learners, and to identify them she uses didactic games, with the help of which they can manifest spontaneously and naturally. The attitude and behavior of a child can change when he plays because the game is distinguished by skills in one area or another. (Catalano & Albulescu, 2019, Roman, 2014)

In the last two decades, the integration of multimedia elements in the teaching-learning process has become a priority of educational policies on all meridians of the world as new horizons open for the practice of education: facilitating the processes of presenting information, processing it by the student, and knowledge building. Multimedia technologies provide the user with various combinations of image, sound, voice, animation, and video, whereas hypermedia (HM) technologies combine multimedia with hypertext, allowing users to smoothly navigate between different types of data: text, sound, still images, and animated images. The traditional teacher's role as an information transmitter can be transformed into that of a learning facilitator by rethinking his own mission: creating an environment (purpose, information, resources, strategy) that allows the student to build. (Herlo, 2012, Tatu, 2020, Rad & Demeter, 2019)

The following multimedia resources and tools can be used in the teaching-learning process, especially in preschool:

- Interactive software;
- Training software;
- Simulation software;
- Knowledge evaluation software;
- Educational games;
- Virtual boards;
- Presentations;
- Publications;
- Digital books;
- Vlogs, s.o.

*Advantages:*

- very large amount of information transmitted in a short period of time;
- multimedia applications are easier to use than traditional ones, more appealing, and can be continuously improved;
- interactivity and integration of various documents;
- applicability in many areas;
- increasing the efficiency of the activity by increasing communication between the producer and the beneficiary.

*Disadvantages:*

- the requirement to purchase generally expensive equipment;
- the relatively long time allocated to optimal acquisition of information available on the most recent media.

## **Research methodology**

We have chosen to design and implement this research because we believe that it provides teachers with relevant information on how they can organize such educational activities, using as tools multimedia strategies in order to develop certain aptitudes for schooling. Also, through this research we wanted to highlight the important role that multimedia strategies have in the life of the preschoolers and how using it, a series of skills can be acquired on all levels.

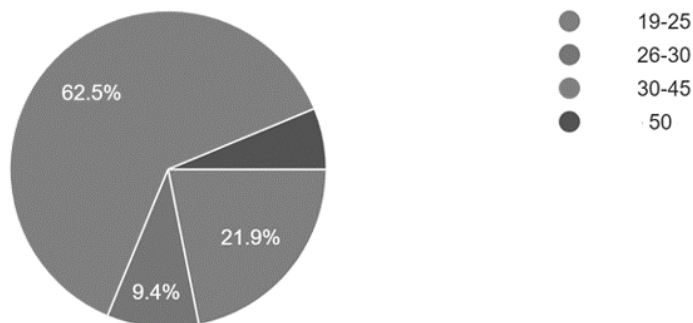
*The objective* of the research is to analyze the main aptitudes that can be developed at preschoolers through the use of multimedia learning strategies.

*The research tool* we have used was the questionnaire. The questionnaire aimed to investigate the opinion of preschool teachers on

the effectiveness of using multimedia teaching learning strategies in developing the skills needed by each preschooler to enter school. We created a questionnaire consisting of a series of 10 questions for the educators, through which we wanted to find out how often they use multimedia teaching learning strategies, how important they consider its role in the teaching activity, the main acquisitions and the benefits it brings and last but not least the skills that are formed and developed through multimedia teaching learning strategies. The questionnaire created followed the actual structure with two parts: the introductory part and the actual questions. In the second part of the questionnaire, we asked 10 questions clearly and concisely, using accessible language. A number of 42 educators completed the questionnaire.

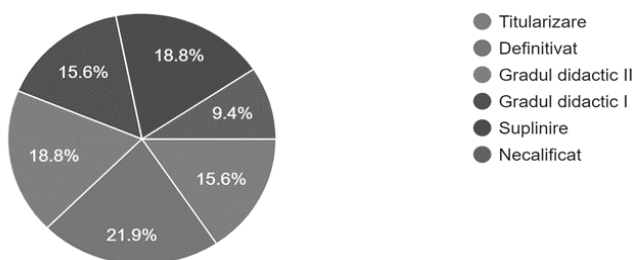
During the survey, 42 responses to the questionnaire were recorded. Of the 32 participants, 100% were female.

The age category of the respondents can be found in the following graph, from which it can be seen that most respondents are between 30 and 45 years old (62.5%). The fewest respondents are over 50 years old.



**Figure 1.** Age of participants

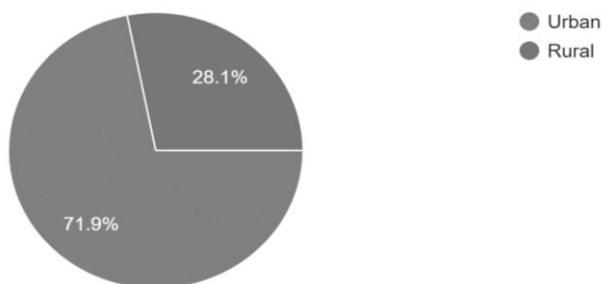
Regarding the experience in education and teaching, the data can be found in the following graph:



**Figure 2.** The experience in the field of work of the participants

It can be seen from the graph above that the didactic grades of the respondents are in balance. A similar percentage of respondents have educational qualifications. The fewest participants work as unskilled, and the largest number of respondents claim that they have the final grades, 21.9%.

One of the questions of interest was where the participants in the research work. The answers are shown in the following graph:



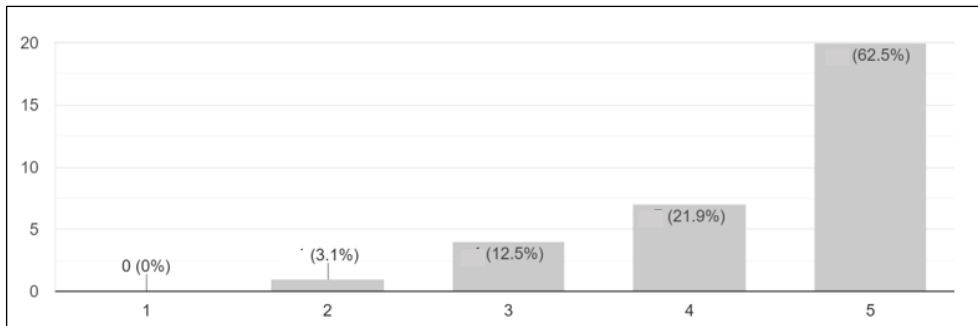
**Figure 3.** The work environment of the participants

According to this graph, it can be seen that 71.9% of respondents work in urban areas.

## Results and findings

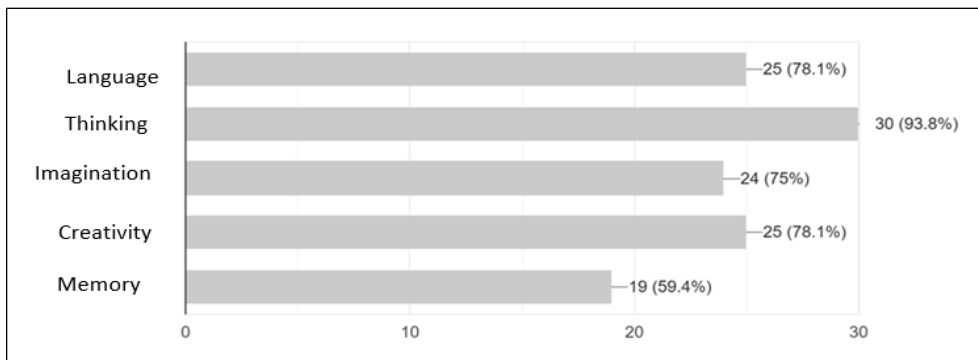
The first question in the questionnaire related to the topic of interest was: "How often do you use multimedia tools in the learning activity?" The scale used was from never to very often, never being scored with 1 point, and very often scored with 5 points. Among those who answered this

question, most claim that they use multimedia tools in the learning activity very often. (62.5%). This is extremely gratifying. As well as the fact that there were no teachers who never used multimedia tools in their activities. Only 3.1% say that multimedia strategies and tools are very rarely used in the educational activities. The complete answers can be found in the graph, as it follows:



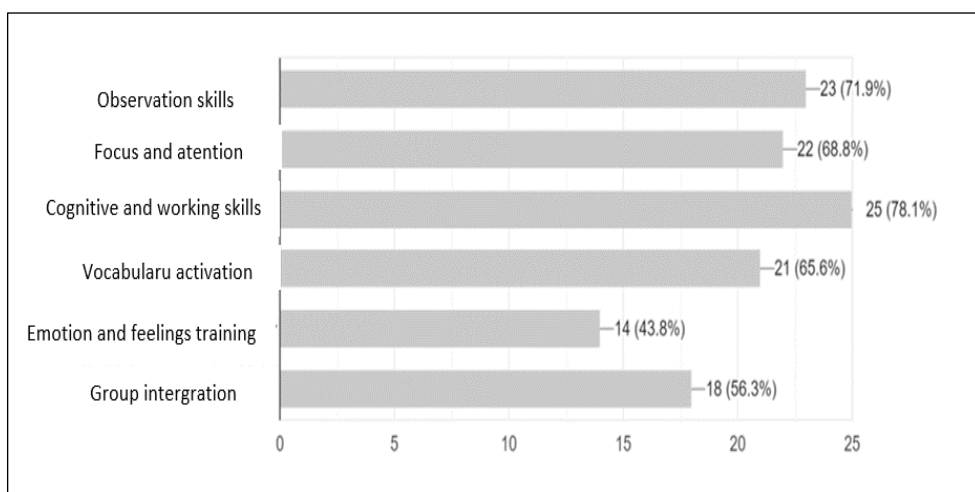
**Figure 4.** The use of multimedia tools and strategies in the activities

Another question of particular importance for the topic was: “What do you think multimedia teaching strategies can develop to preschoolers? Respondents had a choice of a number of answers. A percentage of 93.8% consider that thinking is developed through using it. In the next places in the teachers’ answers, communication (language skills) and creativity are equal (78.1%). 75% of the participants claim that it also develops the imagination. The lowest percentage of 59.4% was received by memory. All answers are presented in the chart below:



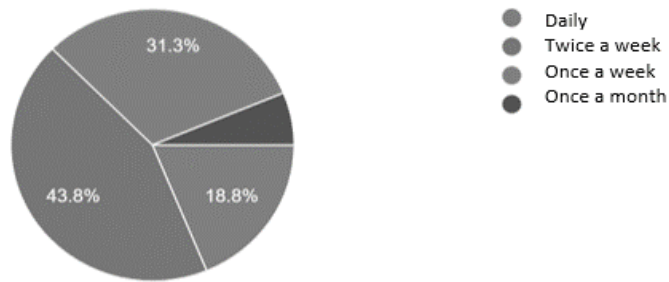
**Figure 5.** The acquirements of multimedia strategies according to respondents

With the help of the following question: “What do you consider to be the benefits of the multimedia learning strategies in the life of the learner?” we wanted to know the opinion of the teachers about the benefits that multimedia learning strategies and tools offer to preschoolers. They answered as it follows: 78.1% considered that the most important benefit of is the formation of intellectual work skills and abilities. Another benefit was the development of the spirit of observation, which obtained a percentage of 71.9%. On the following places in the answers offered by the teachers are with a percentage of 68.8% maintaining the concentration / attention, 65.6% activating the vocabulary and respectively 56.3% helping to integrate the educable in a group. The lowest percentage (43.8%) was obtained by educating the emotions and feelings of the learner. An overview is in the following chart:



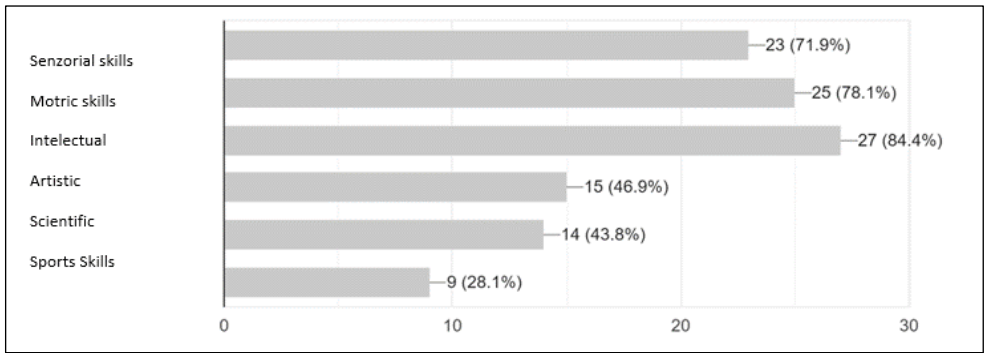
**Figure 6.** The benefits of multimedia strategy use in preschool

We also wanted to find out the frequency of using multimedia learning strategies and tools in preschool activities. Out of the total answers given, 43.8% claim that they use it 2-3 times a week, 31.3% use them every two weeks, and 18.8% use them daily. The analysis of the answers given by the educators is presented above:



**Figure 7.** The frequency of multimedia strategy use in preschool

A reference question for the chosen topic referred to the necessary skills that the learner must acquire in preschool, which will be useful for his entry into school. The most important skills in the answers received were the intellectual ones, with a percentage of 84.4%. Psychomotor skills ranked second in teachers’ responses, 78.1%. In third place are the sensory ones with 71.9%. There was not much emphasis on sports skills being on the last place with a percentage of 28.1%. All the answers are listed in the following chart:



**Figure 8.** Necessary aptitudes of preschoolers to develop for schooling

**Conclusions and further discussions**

The potential benefits of multimedia strategies in educational settings have been well documented at all educational levels, from preschool to higher education. To be more specific, it has the potential to create new

Multimedia teaching learning strategies as a tool in training aptitude for schooling educational environments, introduce new teaching methods, alter the traditional teacher-student relationship, and ultimately improve educational quality. Such technology can be viewed as a critical tool for enhancing educational innovation. According to the researchers, because even the youngest children now live in a more media-saturated world than previous generations, there has been considerable international attention paid to the use of mobile devices in preschool education. Furthermore, by incorporating new technology into the classroom, such as mobile applications, children benefit greatly from such education, as new education types, as better conceptual understanding leads to improved learning performance and also to the development of aptitudes necessary for next educational levels. (Egerău & Coșarbă)

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# **New legislation on the right to decide of people with mental health problems – Legislative proposal review –**

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**Abstract.** The legislation on the protection of mental health in Romania, like that of the other European countries, requires changes to improve the quality of life of people with mental health disorders, increase their quality of life, and reduce psycho-social disabilities.

The Romanian Mental Health Law No. 487 of July 11, 2002, with amendments, regulates the rights and obligations of psychiatric patients in our country (Law No. 487, 2002). Day-to-day reality has called attention to the need for integration and autonomy of people with mental health disorders.

The Romanian Parliament has discussed the adoption of legislative regulations on the improvement of the Mental Health Law, which would increase the respect for the rights of people with mental problems, their quality of life, and the fluidification of bureaucracy in terms of family life and parental authority, for this group of beneficiaries.

**Key words:** *legislation, right to decide, mental health problems, vulnerability.*

## **Legislative proposal review**

The legislation on the protection of mental health in Romania, like that of the other European countries, requires changes to improve the life of people with mental health disorders, increase their quality of life, and reduce psycho-social disabilities.

The Romanian Mental Health Law No. 487 of July 11, 2002, with amendments, regulates the rights and obligations of psychiatric patients in our country (Law No. 487, 2002). Day-to-day reality has called attention to the need for integration and autonomy of people with mental health disorders, in different life contexts. International studies on the need for common legislative aspects at the European level, regarding these rights and obligations, have led our country to propose adjustments to this law. Exemplified here are only a few of these international efforts of specialists who aim to increase the quality of life of the vulnerable group of people with mental health problems.

This useful approach subscribes to prevention in social assistance. Amends to the legislation help empower the vulnerable group of psychiatric patients, facilitate their resilience, and reduce their degree of vulnerability, by avoiding the categorization of people with, in this case, mental disabilities, into the high/ extremely vulnerable group of people with several associated vulnerabilities. This is a preventive and therapeutic measure for psychosocial disabilities that regulates the inclusion of people with special needs in social and professional life, and the respect for their rights.

In this regard, in April 2022, the Romanian Parliament adopted the Government's draft law for the observance of the rights of people with mental health disorders, by improving the protection measures in the case of psychosocial disability.

Next, we will punctually analyze the improvement of the life of the beneficiaries of mental health services, through the adopted legislative reform, regarding people with disabilities.

The approach of this analysis starts from the World Health Organization (WHO) definition of health as the state of all well-being – not only physical and mental but also emotional and psycho-social (<https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/major-themes/health-and-well-being>). In the initial form of the law that protects people with mental health problems, the right to health and physical and mental health care services are protected. The reform of the law brings with the current additions, an

improvement of the well-being, through the freedom of decision and the social freedom of the beneficiaries.

It redefines the freedom of people with mental health problems, from the freedom of choice to the lifting of the restriction to starting a family, adopting children, and having financial autonomy, by receiving the authorization to get a bank loan in their name. This is a measure to stimulate the employment and work inclusion of the group with special needs. Considering social prophylaxis, we can also talk about social therapy (Breaz, 2020; Nadolu, Runcan, & Bahnaru, 2020; Dughi, 2020; Rad & Rad, 2021).

The legislative reform in the field of mental health meets these needs, for the better social welfare of the affected person. Surely, these amendments raise certain questions about the beneficiaries of the Mental Health Law, but also about civil society. The reform was proposed after consultations with civil society.

### **How is it possible for a person with mental problems to present the capacity for discernment and autonomy?**

According to the law, a person with mental disorders is defined as an individual who, at a certain point in his life, has had an episode of mental impairment or is insufficiently developed mentally, or has an addiction to psychoactive substances, for which he requires psychopharmacology. This is the current definition that psychiatry attributes to this kind of patient. But the history of the collective mind that Moscovici and other sociologists discuss in their studies, has shown that psychiatric diagnoses are in continuous dynamics (Moscovici, 1994). Thus, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) is periodically reissued by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) board (<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/research/umls/sourcereleasedocs/current/DSM-5/index.html>). Its text is periodically reviewed by a team of American psychologists and psychiatrists, in collaboration with European specialists, currently being at its 5th edition in the year 2020. The update is carried out in correlation

with the diagnostics of the International Classification of Diseases, 10-edition (ICD-10), (<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/icd/icd10.htm>). DSM-5-TR was published in the spring of 2022 (<https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm/history-of-the-dsm>).

The diagnostic revision was carried out mainly in the sexual, cultural, suicidal, and forensic pathology groups.

Mental health disorders can evolve into peaks separated by lulls, when the patients are compensated, asymptomatic, like in any other chronic disease, such as diabetes mellitus, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), or chronic hepatitis (<https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/overview/about-hiv-and-aids/what-are-hiv-and-aids>). During lull periods, the functionality of the recipients of mental health services is not affected. They exhibit social, family, and occupational aptitude. By aptitude, we mean the mental capacity for the beneficiaries to exercise their human rights and freedoms, in all areas of life. In this way, they can fulfill the multiple roles to which they are called upon to adapt. However, just like a chronic disease, it requires regular monitoring through a specialized service, without infringing the human rights and the rights of the patient, as regards freedom of expression, decision-making, action, and autonomy through self-determination. The beneficiary has access, under the law, to complementary psychosocial health services (Gavrila-Ardelean, 2008). The multidisciplinary team must include specialists with new skills, in:

- supporting, controlling, and motivating the recipient towards self-control and autonomy, to avoid aggressive or antisocial behaviors;
- identifying and defining life problems, and remedying them by guiding the beneficiary towards finding a solution;
- helping the recipients discuss important aspects and aiding them in finding their purpose in life. The specialists should guide the beneficiaries to initiate precontemplation, ambivalent contemplation, determination, decision making, and self-determination regarding the operationalization and personal support, for social autonomy: the power to act and to manage a crisis.

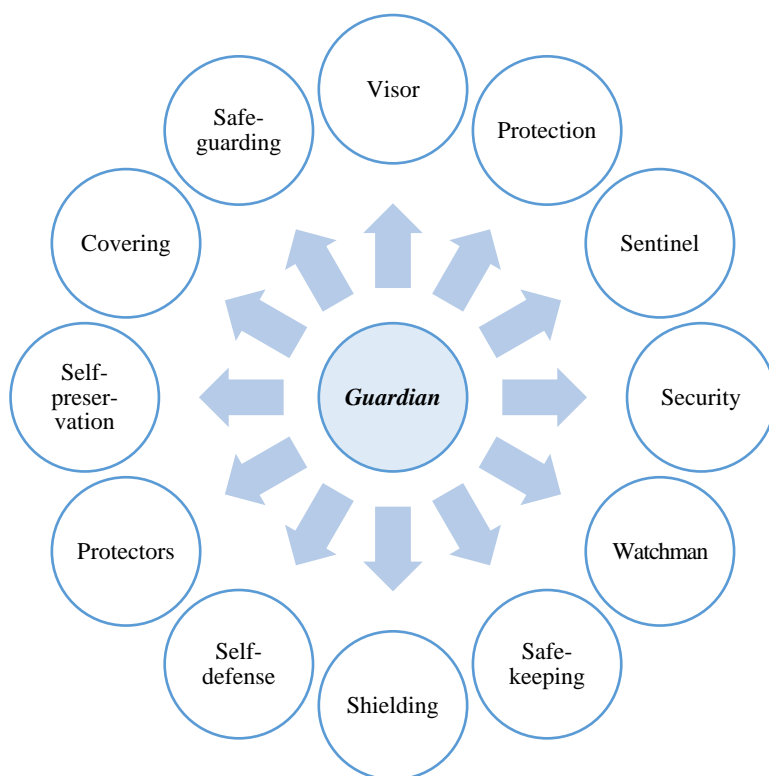
These competencies bring the specialists into a partnership relationship with the beneficiaries of psychosocial services. Emphasis is placed on community psychiatry services by caring for the psychiatric patients in their natural living environment. The current legislative improvement extends these services from medication to social therapy, by supporting and determining the autonomy of people with mental disorders, in their social and professional environment.

The current legislative amendment comes to regulate the notion of “legal representative” and redefines the freedom of children with mental disorders, for the observance of human rights. According to the Romanian and European legislation, parents are the legal representatives of their children, until the age of majority. They decide for the safety of their children’s lives, they take care of and have responsibilities towards their children, in terms of health and security. Parents have the legal responsibility to represent their child’s voice in court.

The amendments to the law innovatively update this aspect. The parents of a child with psychiatric problems will no longer be obliged to restrict the access of their child to age-appropriate human freedoms, as regulated. At the age of majority, young people who are on the record of mental health services will be able to get married and adopt children. They will be able to get a loan from a bank without court implication. Reference is made here to the Decision 601/2020 of the Constitutional Court on the unconstitutionality of the prohibition of persons with disabilities, as a violation of human freedom, a fundamental constitutional right (Guzei-Mangu, 2021). This regulates the right of social desirability with an emphasis on respecting the will, needs, and autonomy of the person with disabilities.

Guardianship, as defined by the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language, 1998, 2009, 2004-2022, is a “legal institution aimed at protecting and managing the interests of a minor or” of a nondiscerning person with mental health problems (<https://dexonline.ro>). Guardianship is a form of protection and support. The person who performs the function of guardianship bears the name of *guardian*.

The SMART Vocabulary reflects the meanings of the word *guardianship* through the roles and responsibilities assigned to the guardian. The most common words and phrases related to *guardianship* are: protection and protectors, covering, safeguarding, safekeeping, security, self-defense, self-preservation, sentinel, shielding, visor, and watchman (Cambridge Dictionary, figure 1), (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/topics/protecting-and-saving/protection-and-protectors/>).



**Figure 1.** SMART Vocabulary of guardianship, after the Cambridge Dictionary  
*Source: author's work*

Through the normative act, a gradual guardianship of the person with mental problems is achieved, based on the informed and freely expressed agreement of the beneficiary, in front of the notary. Thus, the beneficiary receives legal and notarial assistance.

If the person with special needs does not have personal and, implicitly, legal autonomy, he/ she will benefit from judicial advice as an

interim support measure. There will always be a medicolegal act that will recommend the establishment of this measure of social and legal assistance for legal documents involving assets and patrimonial values.

Special guardianship is a measure of protection established by the court and is established only as an exceptional measure of protection.

The legislative changes proposed in 2022 offer the beneficiary of mental health services the following guarantees:

- gradual protection;
- explicitly setting out the timeframe in which the measures put in place will be active;
- clear rules for the periodic medico-psycho-social and legal reassessment of the protection regime;
- free expression and action according to one's own will regarding family life. Thus, people with mental health problems who are under special guardianship or judicial counseling can marry and divorce if they benefit from preventive control and inform their legal guardian about their intention. This measure also applies in the case of divorce, through the verification by the guardian of the existence of the free and informed consent of both spouses for the dissolution of the marriage;
- if one of the parents is placed under judicial advice, the guardianship court may decide that the rights and duties in respect of the child's property shall be exercised only by the other parent;
- in the case of a single-parent family, where the parent is under judicial counseling, the guardianship court decides on the measure that needs to be put in place;
- the family under judicial counseling has the right to adopt children, and the legislative novelty consists in respecting the right of the parent under guardianship to freely express his/ her consent to the adoption of the child if the parent has this capacity for discernment;

- simplifying the procedure for the protection mandate, with the possibility of the contract being made by the guardianship court in the district of residence of the person with mental disability.

In conclusion, these legislative measures increase the respect for the rights of people with mental health problems, improve their degree of well-being and their quality of life, and streamline bureaucracy in terms of family life and parental authority.

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# **Consequences of the mother's excessive emotional involvement in the recovery of the disabled child on marital satisfaction and on the relationship with the other children of the couple**

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**Abstract.** The relationship of mothers who have children with disabilities with other family members: husbands, children, is often affected by the fact that they are emotionally exaggeratedly involved in raising and recovering these children, taking over all the tasks arising the disabled child. On the long term, marital satisfaction in both partners is lower and the relationship with the other children is also affected. Awareness of these mothers is required in order to have a successful family life in the long term.

**Keywords:** disabilities, mothers, marital satisfaction, involvement, family relationship.

From a psychological point of view, the couple is considered a bipolar structure based on mutual consensus. The two partners can start a family and get married or just live together. Living as a couple, married or not, involves an union of two people, socially accepted as having the roles of husband and wife, who have rights and obligations assumed between them and their children.

In a family each becomes a co-cause and a co-effect in the evolution of the other members. There are three situations that an individual can have in his family: partner, parent and child. In and through the family, a person develops, assimilates values, the family is the way, the chance of self-perfection (Mitrofan and Ciupercă, 2009, p.15).

One of the most important roles that the family has is that of procreation. The two members of the couple want to become parents at some point. Women want to become mothers in order to strengthen the couple, considering the relationship with the child as the most desirable possible while men want their children out of a desire to pass on values, to perpetuate their name, considering this as a transgenerational debt (Neuburger, 2016, p.67).

Marital satisfaction comes from the absence of conflict, from that emotional good that gives the two partners the subjective impression of happiness (Turliuc, 2004, page 197). There are several factors that can influence this satisfaction. Among them are good understanding, socio-cultural similarity, lifestyle, personality factors, relationship skills with the other member of the couple, with extended family members, fidelity and, last but not least, involvement in raising and succeeding children.

The appearance of a child in the family can lead to a disturbance of the couple's balance. Even if both partners wanted their child, the new family member needs a lot of attention and care from the parents and can bring with it a couple crisis.

To become a parent you do not have to complete a course, get a qualification. Anyone can become a parent, regardless of their human quality. No one intends, does not want their future child to have a disability, to be a child with special requirements for supervision, care and education. However, children with various health problems and disabilities are born and their parents are taken aback by such an event. I don't know anything about the child's disability, about recovery and the possibilities of early intervention, many can't even accept the evidence. Too often fathers abandon their families and rebuild their lives in time, while mothers are overwhelmed by the new situation they face and

overlap with the pain of separation from their loved one in which they had placed all their hopes for the future. quiet and safe. Together or alone, the parents are, like the other parents who have typical children, more or less educated, from different backgrounds, with a higher or lower social status, with harmonious or disorganized families, but surprised by the unknown. .

The stigma that hovers over the child also affects his family, the parents are affected by a similar treatment from society, which categorizes people (Goffman, 1968, p. 44).

The world of people with disabilities is a special world because, most of the time, a lot of controversies arise both between specialists and between members of society. It is often accompanied by a lot of prejudice that leads to reprehensible attitudes and suffering.

Parents of children with disabilities, as well as parents of typical children, have been looking forward to becoming the parents of a healthy and beautiful child, who can learn very well, play sports, has a nice life. They haven't been documented, they don't know how to approach to their children with certain disabilities, they haven't asked in their requests that their future child to be born with health problems. At the birth of the child, they were taken by surprise, most of them were shocked and considered that was a great injustice that happening to them, and that they weren't the ones who deserved such a fate. One by one, friends and sometimes even close relatives move away from the family in which a child with a disability was born, so as not to be disturbed by their inability to help, ignorance, or because they want to avoid the tears of empathy of the parents of disabled child.

What can young parents do? All their plans for the future have changed, all their hopes are dashed. Depending on their personality type, degree of professional training, life experience, support of the family and friends or simply depending on luck, they adopt different defence mechanisms. Some choose, more or less consciously, to deny that they are facing a problem, others are angry with God, with all those who have managed to have children without problems, themselves, some fall into

a deep depression and only a few they accept quickly and strive to do everything they can to recover the child. From the moment they accept the situation they face, they meet a lot of other people who look at them with pity, contempt or label them in every way, they assimilate themselves as a family with a disability. The road they took becomes even harder. Most doctors and specialists shoulder helplessly. Surgeries, prostheses, recovery procedures, the child's education cost more than the parents can afford and the parents' possibilities are more and more limited. After finally being able to accept that they have a child with a disability, they are again overwhelmed by the problems that arise along the way and are forced to accept that they are in an atypical situation, they are "different", that anywhere and from now on, they will have a different social status, different priorities and will very often be limited to live a "normal" life.

When a child with a disability joins a school group, whether he or she is integrated into mainstream education or the inclusive education center, whether he or she is accompanied by one or two parents who also need integration and understanding. from other parents and teachers. They are parents with Special Counseling Requirements, even if they don't seem to request it. It seems a paradox, however, how can a parent who denies that he or she has a child with a disability accept that he himself or herself needs counseling ???

The parent will become a real partner of the teacher only when he accepts the reality he is facing, and a good teacher must recognize the stage in which the parent is in order to help him or her and the child and to avoid making mistakes and further deepening the abyss in which this parent is. The teacher must avoid exaggerated pretensions, misunderstood advice, and potential sources of humiliation.

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, in her book *On Death and Dying* (1969), recalls for the first time the stages a person goes through when facing the pain of a loss. The author refers with priority to the pain of losing a loved one or finding out a cruel news about one's loved. She identified five

stages of pain, which may be applicable to the pain caused by a breakup (divorce, breakup) or personal or emotional suffering. to loved ones:

1. Denial - the moment when the person refuses to believe that what is happening to him is true, the world becomes overwhelming, life without logic or meaning, without perspective. It is a natural defense mechanism against pain, a conscious (delayed) or unconscious refusal to accept the truth.

2. Anger - the moment of "Why me?" / "Why me?". The person considers himself unjust punished and doesn't understand why. He or she considers himself/herself a valuable person who deserves to have a life without suffering and worries, just like those around him and doesn't understand why he was chosen to carry such a heavy cross. He or she is angry, angry with everyone else, herself, and God who let this happen.

3. Negotiation - is the stage where the question is "What if it was?", As a way to compensate for the pain and find compromises. The individual still nurtures hopes, makes promises to God and promises to change, to be better, to accept sacrifices if things are remedied.

4. Depression - appears as a reaction to all dreams, future plans, dusty projects, helplessness and frustrations that arise. The individual begins to cry for pity, he or she no longer sees any possibility of escaping from the trap in which he considers himself/herself trapped.

5. Acceptance - is the last step and the first step towards healing. This doesn't mean that the pain has disappeared, but unlike the other stages, the person can now look at the situation with some detachment, with the hope that if he cannot remove the loss he or she will at least be able to reduce some of its consequences.

Mitch Turbin (2004), in his article *Dealing with the Feelings*, also identifies five similar stages that a deaf person goes through until he or she accepts his or her deaf identity:

- Denial - is the moment when the individual realizes that he is different and refuses to accept reality;
- Anger - is born from the belief that it does not deserve to happen to him and that he also had the right to happiness;

- Reconciliation - begins to get used to, is the stage in which he accepts the prosthesis to be able to communicate, although he still hides it from strangers;
- Depression - the deaf person gets tired of hiding, falls into a deep sadness;
- Acceptance - realizes that we are all mortal, life goes on with good and bad.

Extrapolating, we can appreciate that the same happens in the case of other people with disabilities or in the case of their families.

Parental counseling, in order to be effective, we recommend that it be designed and carried out in relation to these stages in which the parent of the child with a disability is. It is very important that the diagnosis of the condition, of the stage in which the parent is, be made correctly because we cannot work with a parent to find solutions for the child's integration, to provide him with optimal physical and mental comfort, if this parent is in denial. We can't expect someone to solve a problem if they don't think they have a problem. That is why the parent must be helped to go through the phases of denial, anger and depression in order to reach acceptance. This approach is mainly focused on the parent, who is assisted in his work of cognitive and emotional transformation in order to be balanced with the reality of his child.

Most of the time, mothers are the ones who, when the family does not split up, take more care of the recover and educations of the child with a disability. Mothers go through the stages of acceptance faster, invest more time, effort and skills *in the mission* of raising the child. Many of them become overprotective, they feel obliged to constantly supervise the child, to make sure that everything that is good for him is done. In their exaggerated care, they forget the fact that other family members are just as important as the disabled child and need the same involvement and presence of her. She neglects her other children, believing that they can manage on their own, neglects their partner, who gradually find other concerns, or take refuge in inappropriate defence mechanisms, tacitly accepting the gradual distance that erodes the couple's

relationship and marital satisfaction. The mother's excessive care for the disabled child's needs causes the father to detach himself from the family role to detach himself from the domestic and emotional problems of his wife and children.

## Research methodology

In order to be able to research the veracity of the above, we proposed a study in which we had as general objective: Increasing marital satisfaction in couples with children with disabilities. As specific objectives we proposed:

1. *Identify the main factors that lead to a decrease in marital satisfaction in these couples.*
2. *Awareness of mothers about the negative consequences of excessive involvement in raising and educating a child with a disability on the couple's relationship and the relationship with the other children of the couple.*

The hypotheses we have considered are the following:

- *Marital satisfaction in subjects from families with children with disabilities differs depending on the involvement of mothers in raising and recovering the child with a disability.*
- *The relationship of the mothers of children with disabilities with the other children of the couple differs depending on their involvement in the upbringing and recovery of the child with disabilities.*

The participants in our study were 12 mothers who each had a child with a disability and another child. Seven of them have secondary education, five higher education; six live in rural areas, six in urban areas; four come from disorganized families, eight from complete families.

For our study we used the observation and an interview that we applied to the study participants. The questionnaire was designed by us and contains 8 questions:

1. *Who cares more about your child with a disability in your family?*
2. *Are you happy with your husband's involvement in raising children?*

3. *Do you feel that you are able to maintain a balanced relationship with all your family members?*
4. *On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with your relationship with your child with a disability?*
5. *On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with your relationship with your husband?*
6. *On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with your relationship with the other child?*
7. *If you could, what would you change in your family?*
8. *Do you have any regrets? What?*

### **Interpretation of results**

In the first question in the question, all twelve mothers consider that they are the ones who are most concerned with raising and recovering the child with a disability, those from classical families mention some of the difficulties they face: insufficient time, worries about the future of the child, misunderstanding from the teachers, higher expectations from the spouses and the other child, etc.

On the second question, most mothers also believe that their husband is not involved enough in raising the child, only one is very happy that her husband is equally interested and contributes, within the time available, to raise their daughter with hearing impairment. He is the one who accompanies her to speech therapy classes and goes with the little girl to the park near the house.

Question three raised more questions from mothers. The four single mothers would like their other child to be more understanding and to spend more time with the disabled sister/ brother. Of the eight mothers from classical families, three consider that they manage to maintain a balance but would like more involvement from their husbands, one is satisfied and four mothers admit that they do not succeed.

In the fourth question, seven mothers chose 8, three 9 and one 7 as the score. In general, mothers are satisfied with their involvement in

raising a child with a disability and consider this a priority, because that this child need ongoing support and supervision.

Question five, addressed to eight mothers from organized families, shows one happy mother and seven who feel overwhelmed and would like their husbands to be involved more. They admit that the couple's relationship is no longer working as they expected. One mother is participating in couple therapy with her husband, four others want this and three mothers have resigned.

When we asked about the relationship with the other child, the mothers chose quite low scores: six chose as a score 5, two 6, three 8 and one 9.

In question seven, mothers would like their son / daughter with a disability to be able to be recovered and to have autonomy, to have a normal couple relationship, and for mentioned they would like their children to be friends, to understand each other better.

In terms of regrets are mentioned: lack of specialized support, lack of empathy of the members of the society, lack of time and means of recovery, the fact that they would like have a typical family.

From the analysis of the data obtained we found that the families (six) living in rural areas have a better relationship and marital satisfaction is satisfactory. This is due to the fact that in the smaller villages people know each other better, the families they belong to are more involved in supporting the children.

We also found that in the families of those with higher education there are more expectations from their husbands, respectively from the other child, and the couple's relationship, although we expected it to be better, is below expectations. Two of the five husbands with higher education consume alcohol, one has a successful business and he has been away from home for a long time, one is only physically present at home and one considers that the mother is the one who has to take care of the children.

## Conclusions

Our research confirms the two hypotheses, the involvement of the mother in raising the child with a disability, when it fails to maintain a balance in the relationship with all family members, leads in time to the deterioration of family relationships. On the other hand, marital satisfaction decreases for both partners and the relationship with other children is also affected. Mothers would need to be aware that they need the support of other family members, they have to try to delegate some of the tasks related to the disabled child, and not take over all the tasks. It is also very important for them to try to remember that their other children also need their presence, affection and maternal attention.

Our research also has some limitations: the small number of participants, the perspective of a single member of the couple. For the future, we propose a complex study in which to study marital satisfaction in several families, to extend the assessment to the husbands and other children of the couple and also to develop an intervention plan to help mothers become aware of the importance of maintaining an optimal relations with all family members for the benefit of all.

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